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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

APRIL, 1929

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"For I Desired Mercy, and not Sacrifice"

TOWARD the close of the nineteenth century, it was the custom among Occidental students of Buddhism to maintain that the Buddha had not laboured to establish a spiritual religion, but rather a somewhat bleak and arid system of morality, whose essence was negation, and whose inexorable goal was death, complete annihilation of conscious being. It has, perhaps, already been made clear, in these Notes, that Gautama Buddha sought to establish a rich and living spiritual system, the heart of which was a realization of the hierarchy of Masters, above whom was the still higher and more august Celestial Hierarchy, and that the rules of conduct, of meditation and intellectual training, which hold so large a place in the Buddha's teaching, are precisely the rules of discipleship, a lucid and detailed description of what the disciple must do and learn, in order to draw closer to the Masters of Wisdom, to come consciously within the aura of the Lodge of Masters, to follow in the footsteps of those great Beings, and, if he win full victory, to join their ranks and help to bear their burden. And this has been shown, not from the more transcendental and mystical texts of Northern Buddhism, but from the Pali Suttas of the Southern School, the School of Ceylon and Siam: these most ancient and authentic Buddhist records are "full of the sparkle of esotericism," the heart and essence of that highest Occultism which our Theosophical studies enable us to recognize.

Our studies should have shown us this, and something more. We should have come to understand that the Buddha had clearly in view, and wisely and consistently laboured for, a great moral and spiritual reformation of India; for one reason, because India then represented, and even now represents, an immense investment of spiritual capital, an effort of millenniums by the Lodge of Masters; for many centuries a submerged and buried capital, almost

an investment that has gone astray; yet an investment which the Lodge is bound by spiritual law to recover, though the effort may take centuries.

In the "Notes and Comments" for January, 1929, an attempt was made to discover what this spiritual investment was, and through the operation of what forces of human sin and folly it became submerged. It was there suggested that the spiritual history of India was in the main the history of two great and ancient races: the red Rajputs, coming, perhaps, from mystical Egypt; and the white Brahmans, who, at some time a good many millenniums before our era, came down from Central Asia through the high passes of the Himalayas, and, beginning among the Five Rivers which unite to form the Indus, in time spread southward and eastward through the Ganges valley. The red Rajputs, when we get our first view of them, were already in possession of the Greater Mysteries, which are imparted through Initiation; those teachings which our Western scholars mistakenly think of as the mystical "speculations" of the Great Upanishads; mistakenly, because they are the fruit, not of speculation, but of spiritual experience, of direct vision. The Brahmans, those of the white race who settled in the plains of India, do not appear to have known the Greater Mysteries. Of this, there is twofold evidence: first, the often stated fact that, in the hymns of the Rig Veda, the spiritual heritage of the Brahmans, there is no teaching of Reincarnation and Liberation, the twin doctrines of the Mysteries; and second, and even more explicit, the statement of the two greatest Upanishads, that these twin doctrines had never reached the Brahmans until they were imparted to the father of Shvetaketu by the Rajput King-Initiate Pravahana; until that time these teachings "had been among all peoples the hereditary teaching of the Rajputs alone."

But the Brahmans had nevertheless a great and exceptional spiritual heredity; their Vedic hymns are full of remote echoes of hidden wisdom, of a teaching which, perhaps, their earliest ancestors had fully and consciously possessed on the high plateaux of Central Asia, unnumbered millenniums before the descent through the snowy passes to the Indian plains. In virtue of this remarkable spiritual heredity the Brahmans, as soon as the Rajputs opened to them the doors of the hidden wisdom, became apt pupils, thenceforth supplying many recruits to the Lodge of Masters.

As against this credit, two less advantageous factors must be counted. The first is the tendency of the Brahman mind to over-intellectual development, as a result of which much of the practical mysticism of the Rajputs was transformed into fine-drawn metaphysics; the commentaries of the groups of Sutras, for example, are filled with long and subtle disputations, loaded with the contentious reasonings of opposing advocates. What belonged to the spirit and the soul was dragged down to the plane of the mind, and there flattened out into lifeless intellectualism.

The second adverse factor had a wider reach. The intellectual "superiority" of the Brahmans reappeared as ambition, which by degrees sought to dominate, and did in course of time completely dominate, the whole mental, moral and social life of India, and, to a large degree, also its political life, a domina-

tion which lasted for millenniums. It would seem that, as an echo of their earlier and fuller spiritual inheritance, the ancestors of the Brahmans, when they entered Northern India, still possessed what one may call a system of practical magic based upon incantation, or the Occult correlations of sound, and on an understanding of personal, mental and psychical "magnetism." This system they used, from the beginning, to establish their power and influence. They sought and received rewards from those of the princes who were not Initiates, for the performance of magical ceremonies whose general purpose was to secure success and prosperity by influencing and dominating psychic conditions, by establishing a favourable and positive psychic atmosphere, much as a magnetically gifted orator establishes an ascendency over his audience, largely by using, even though unconsciously, the same Occult powers of the voice, which carries and spreads his personal magnetism. So, in the Upanishads, we find many stories of Brahman practitioners of this magical system of magnetic sound invited by princes to perform ceremonies making for success. And we find that they receive as their reward large herds of cattle, in which, as in other ancient lands, wealth mainly consisted. Many of these earlier ceremonies centred about an altar on which burned a sacred fire, symbol of the Hidden Fire of the Spirit, and personified as the god Agni, Lord of the Sacred Fire, to whom are addressed the first series of hymns of the Rig Veda. Worship of the Hidden Fire, symbolized by an ever-burning sacred flame, is of immemorial antiquity; it goes back to the immensely remote time before a branch of the white Central Asian race made its way to prehistoric Persia, carrying with it the spiritual essence of Zoroastrianism.

Thus "sacrifice," in this earliest period, would appear to have consisted wholly of adoration of the sacred, perpetual fire, into which melted butter was poured as an offering of consecrated fuel, symbolizing the offering of the personal powers to the divine Spiritual Fire, the Logos. There was a second form of rite, namely, the Soma "sacrifice," with which the Sama Veda is largely concerned. The Soma appears to have been a stimulant, or narcotic, which, by rendering quiescent the physical powers, gave the psychical powers freer play, thus liberating the faculties of clairvoyance and clairaudience, much as these powers may be liberated to-day by the methods of hypnotism. It is true that there was also a "divine Soma," a genuine spiritual influx, of which the natural Soma became the symbol; yet it seems certain that the physical Soma, the magical narcotic, was widely used in the system of practical magic hereditary among the white Brahmans. It may be noted, in passing, that a very similar cult exists to the present day among the remoter pagan tribes who inhabit the high mountains of Western Mexico; they prepare a magical potion from certain kinds of cactus, which they hold sacred, and by its use their magicians induce "prophetic" states, that is, psychical states of clairvoyance and clairaudience. To make the parallel closer, the aboriginal Mexicans have a cycle of immemorial songs or incantations used in these rites only, which may well be compared with the verses of the Sama Veda, chanted by the Brahmans at the Soma sacrifice.

Besides these two earlier "sacrifices" of Agni and Soma, a third and more sinister form of "sacrifice" gradually established itself; namely, the sacrifice of animals, with profuse offerings of blood, in the forms which play so great a part in the system of worship embodied in the book of Leviticus.

For these animal sacrifices, so widely spread both in space and time, it would seem that three different motives may be assigned. First, the desire to gain the goodwill of the supernatural powers for the flocks and herds by an offering corresponding to the first fruits of the fields. Second, there was the quite intelligible but not quite creditable wish of the priesthood to obtain a free supply of food: "Thou shalt bring the meat offering that is made of these things unto Yahweh . . . and that which is left of the meat offering shall be Aaron's and his sons' . . ." The third purpose is more sinister; it rests on the belief that freshly shed blood is a potent aid to invocations of ghostly powers, whether human or elemental. It is, in effect, a phase of what is called black magic.

It is probable that all three motives entered into the gradual adoption of animal sacrifices by the Brahman priesthood, and it is also probable that the system of animal sacrifices had prevailed for ages among the darker races of Southern India, among whom many forms of black magic, generally associated with mesmeric influences, have always prevailed. At any rate, it is certain that the Brahmans very generally adopted the practice of animal sacrifices as an additional means of extending the despotic power of their priestcraft over the princes and peoples of India. Already in the oldest Upanishads there is much evidence of their success in this effort.

When the Buddha began his mission, this system of animal sacrifice was firmly established. It need hardly be said that in it his Order, pledged to abstain from animal food and from the taking of life, could have no part whatever. But it seems clear that the Buddha's plan went far beyond the establishment of an Order as a direct recruiting ground for the Lodge. He desired also to bring about the redemption of the Brahmans, to break up the great, tyrannous system of priestcraft, and so to purify the Brahman race that its exceptional qualities and gifts might be turned in the direction of spiritual development and attainment. To gain this end, he worked along several lines. First, he made many appeals to the best and highest elements in the character of the Brahmans, to their ancient, submerged spiritual heredity, and in fact succeeded in winning many disciples from their ranks. How far the Brahmanical minds of these new Buddhists were influential in changing his directly practical teachings into the somewhat wire-drawn dialectics of certain schools of Buddhism, just as earlier Brahmanical minds had metamorphosed the spiritual discipline of the old Rajput schools into controversial philosophical systems, is an interesting subject of inquiry which we cannot at present pursue.

The Buddha made a second attack on Brahman priestcraft by flatly denying, at every opportunity, the claim of the Brahmans to rank above the Rajputs, or Kshatriyas, and to hold the highest place among the four great

classes of Indian society. The Buddha in general refused to discuss questions of cosmogony, or, indeed, any questions which did not bear immediately on discipleship. It is of immense interest that on almost the only occasion when he did speak of cosmogony, giving an exceedingly interesting account of the development of the early races of mankind in the present world-period, the practical moral to which this cosmogonical teaching was made to lead was the superior rank and antiquity of the Kshatriyas, or Rajputs, and the inferiority of the Brahman priests. So consistently is this purpose carried out that, while in enumerations of the four classes in all Brahmanical books, the Brahmans invariably stand first, this is never the case in the Buddhist scriptures, which as invariably give the precedence to the Kshatriyas. This became such an ingrained habit with the Buddhist recorders that even when they tell of a Brahman enumerating the four classes, they make him yield the first place to the Kshatriya, something which no Brahman would conceivably have done.

Finally, the Buddha threw the great weight of his influence against the whole system of animal sacrifice, which was one of the means through which the Brahman priestcraft riveted its power upon the people. He worked toward this end both by example and by precept. The disciples of his Order were pledged, as we have seen, not to take life. Further, his teaching of Karma, and of Liberation through spiritual effort, ran directly contrary to the Brahmanical system of expiation through the sacrifice of animals; it was the exact equivalent of Paul's affirmation: "It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." The Buddha further faced the problem directly, in a discourse which is recorded in one of the Suttas named after the Brahman Kutadanta, who is the central figure of the episode there related. It is a part of the fine, pervading humour of the Suttas that the name of this distinguished Brahman means "peak-tooth," as though with reference to his creophagous character.

The recorders of the Sutta begin, as always, by painting in a rich Oriental background, against which the leading figures presently come forth, represented dramatically, by their own words, rather than descriptively. We are told that the Buddha was journeying through the country of the Magadhas, accompanied by about five hundred disciples, and that, coming to the settlement of Khanumata, he was encamped with his followers in a garden where young mango trees were planted; their deep shade offering a pleasant resting place.

Now it happened that a part at least of the land of this region, very fertile and teeming with life, had been bestowed by the King of the Magadhas, Seniya Bimbisara, on the distinguished Brahman Kutadanta, just as large tracts are granted to Brahmans in Rajputana to-day; the Brahman Kutadanta had succeeded to that extent in establishing himself and acquiring worldly wealth. Perhaps as an act of gratitude, he had formed the design of offering a great sacrifice of animals: seven hundred bulls, seven hundred bullocks, seven hundred heifers, seven hundred goats and seven hundred rams had been assembled, to be slaughtered for the glory of Kutadanta, and many Brahmans

had gathered together, to take part in the sacrifice, and, we may suppose, in "the leavings of the sacrifice," according to the phrase of the *Bhagavad Gîta.*

When the Buddha and his disciples encamped in the mango garden, the fame of his coming went abroad among the people, both the Brahmans and the householders of Khanumata, and they said among themselves: "The ascetic Gotama, in truth, the son of the Sakyas, he who went forth from the Sakya family, has come with many of his disciples and is encamped here in the mango garden. Concerning the Master Gotama fair fame has gone abroad, that this Master is an Arhat, a perfect Buddha, full of wisdom and virtue, a welcome one, teaching the way of salvation to devas and men. He teaches a law of righteousness lovely in its beginning, lovely in its middle, lovely in its consummation. It is good, in truth, to go to see such an Arhat as he!" So the Brahmans and householders of Khanumata went forth in larger and lesser groups toward the mango garden.

Now, at this very time it happened that the distinguished Brahman Kutadanta had mounted to the upper terrace of his dwelling, shaded and cherished by cooling breezes, to enjoy a "day-sleep," as the Pali phrase goes, and, seeing the groups of Brahmans and householders going past toward the mango garden, he asked his major-domo what this concourse might mean. His major-domo repeated to him what the Brahmans and householders were saying to each other, concerning the coming of the ascetic Gotama and his high spiritual rank.

Wisely and logically the Brahman Kutadanta determined within himself that, since he was contemplating a great sacrifice, and since the ascetic Gotama was reputed to be learned concerning sacrifice, it would be well to visit the ascetic Gotama, and to consult him regarding the proper consummation of the threefold sacrifice with its sixteen concomitants. So he sent the major-domo to the Brahmans and householders of Khanumata, who were on their way to the mango garden, asking them to await his coming, for he too desired to visit the ascetic Gotama. So the major-domo carried the message.

The recorders of the story, with their love for round numbers, say that several hundred Brahmans had come to be present at the great sacrifice which the Brahman Kutadanta had prepared. When the major-domo brought his message, they asked somewhat incredulously among themselves whether it could be true that the distinguished Brahman Kutadanta was planning to visit the ascetic Gotama.

The Brahmans raised their voices in protest, declaring that it was not seemly that the highly distinguished Brahman Kutadanta should visit the ascetic Gotama; a Brahman deeply versed in Vedic lore, a teacher of disciples, a holder of rich lands from the king of the Magadhas, and, withal, a man venerable and full of years. On the contrary, it would be more fitting that the ascetic Gotama, who was a much younger man, should first visit the distinguished Brahman Kutadanta. It would seem, then, that this event took place comparatively early in the Buddha's long mission, while the fact of his relative youth was still very noticeable.

But the worthy Kutadanta held to his purpose. The ascetic Gotama was an Arhat, a Buddha, supremely enlightened; moreover neither in birth nor lineage did he at any point yield to the good Brahman himself. So Kutadanta would go, in spite of protests, to visit the ascetic Gotama.

So not only did he go, but carried with him the whole Brahmanical company, winning them over to his view. So they all went together to the mango garden and greeted the Master, taking their seats in silence beside him.

Then Kutadanta the Brahman spoke thus:

"It has been heard by me, Sir Gotama, that the ascetic Gotama knows well the successful conduct of the threefold sacrifice with its sixteen concomitants. But I myself do not know well the successful conduct of the threefold sacrifice with its sixteen concomitants, yet I desire to offer a great sacrifice. It were a fortunate thing for me, if the worthy Gotama would instruct me concerning the successful conduct of the threefold sacrifice."

The situation is deeply humorous, and was so felt by every devout Buddhist hearer of the Sutta. That the Master of mercy should be consulted regarding the right method of slaughtering hundreds of bulls and rams, and that, instead of reproaching Kutadanta and condemning the whole proceeding without stint, the Master should appear to give the advice which was asked for, of necessity appealed to the keen sense of humour which runs through these ancient books, a humour whose characteristic is, that it is invariably coupled with a high spiritual purpose. Further, it is profoundly characteristic of the Buddha's method, that he put himself as far as possible in the position of his questioner, accepted that questioner's views, and then proceeded, always from the questioner's standpoint, so to unfold the principles involved, as to bring the questioner gradually to accept the truer, deeper view, to adopt the principles of the Buddha's teaching. In pursuance of this wise method, the Buddha said nothing to the Brahman Kutadanta regarding the evils of the system of animal sacrifices or the sin of taking life. Instead, he answered with his habitual courtesy:

"Hear, then, Brahman, paying good heed, and I shall declare the matter."

"So be it, Sir!" the Brahman Kutadanta replied. The Master said:

"In by-gone days, Brahman, there was a king, Maha-vijita by name, whose kingdom was great, who had much wealth and stored-up gold and silver, with great treasure of wealth and grain, with full treasury and barns. Once, when the king had withdrawn himself in secret, he reflected, thinking, 'I possess all the good things a mortal can desire, the wide circle of the earth I have won for my pleasure. It would be well for me to make a great sacrifice, to gain long life and prosperity!' And so King Maha-vijita summoned his household priest and told him the thought that had come to him when he was withdrawn into solitude, and of his purpose to make a great sacrifice, securing long life and prosperity, and asking to be instructed as to how the sacrifice should be made to this end.

"Thus addressed, the Brahman household priest replied to the king, saying that the king's realm was disturbed and troubled, beset with highwaymen

and robbers. Should the king levy a contribution at such a time for a great sacrifice, the king would err. Or should the king determine to visit these evil-doers with swift punishment, this also would not avail, for those who escaped would continue as before to do deeds of violence. But there is a better way: not to punish, but to help. Wherever there are those in the king's realm who are engaged in husbandry, let the king give them seed-corn. Wherever there are those in the king's realm who are engaged in trading, let the king give them money. Wherever there are those in the king's realm who are in the king's service, let the king give them food and payment. Then these men will no longer trouble the peace of the king's land, the revenues of the king's realm will increase, the land will enjoy peace, men will rejoice and dandle their sons in their arms, and none in the kingdom will bolt his door.

"The king did even so, and all went as the Brahman household priest had said. The revenues of the king's realm increased, the land enjoyed peace, men rejoiced and dandled their sons in their arms, and none bolted his door.

"Then the king summoned the Brahman, his household priest, and said, 'Tranquility is restored, revenue is increased, contentment reigns. I desire now, Brahman, to make a great sacrifice. Instruct me how this may be done, for long life and prosperity!'

"Thereupon the Brahman, the household priest, counselled the king to gain the consent of four great classes of his subjects to the sacrifice: first, the Kshatriyas who governed lands under the king; second, the Kshatriyas who were ministers in the king's service; third, the Brahmans of distinction, whether in the country or in the cities; fourth, the rich householders, whether in the country or in the cities. The king sought their consent, and all gladly gave it. Thus all these classes were made partakers of the sacrifice."

Then the Buddha enumerated eight virtues, eight gifts and graces which the king possessed, and in like manner four virtues possessed by the Brahman, the household priest. These twelve gifts, together with the consent of the four classes, making sixteen in all, became the sixteen concomitants of the sacrifice. And further, a generous attitude of the king's mind, thrice repeated, completed the threefold nature of the sacrifice, according to the traditional rule. The Buddha continued:

"At that sacrifice, verily, Brahman, no cattle were slain, nor any goats, nor fowl, nor swine, nor was any living thing deprived of life; no trees were felled, nor was sacred grass cut to strew upon the ground; nor was any compulsion used upon those who helped. Only clarified butter, oil, fresh butter, curds, honey and the juice of sugar-cane were offered in making that sacrifice."

Many beneficent results followed in that ancient realm. And among those who heard the Buddha, the results were not less happy. All the Brahmans applauded, saying, "That was a true sacrifice! That was a successful sacrifice!"

All, indeed, applauded excepting only Kutadanta. Then the Brahmans who had come with him asked him whether he did not approve. Kutadanta replied: "I do not withhold approval from what the ascetic Gotama has said,

but this thought came to me: 'The ascetic Gotama does not say, "Thus did I hear," nor does he say, "Thus should it be!" The ascetic Gotama says instead, "Thus it was."' Therefore I thought within myself, 'Of a truth the ascetic Gotama was at that time the king, or the Brahman, the household priest!'" The Buddha answered that he was the priest.

Thereupon Kutadanta asked whether there might not be some better, higher sacrifice, noble though that ancient sacrifice had been. And in answer the Buddha revealed to Kutadanta the path of discipleship, as the true offering. Kutadanta was completely won, and straightway sought and gained admission to the Master's Order.

There remains the practical outcome of the story. The Brahman Kutadanta countermanded the great sacrifice that he had planned, and gave orders that the cattle and sheep and goats he had assembled should be spared, and should live their lives in peace. In that instance, at any rate, the sacrifice of animals came to an end.

Concerning the larger results of this teaching, it may be profitable to quote what Professor T. W. Rhys Davids wrote, a good many years ago, concerning this Sutta:

"On this question, as on the question of caste or social privileges, the early Buddhists took up, and pushed to its logical conclusions, a rational view held by others. And on this question of sacrifice their party won. The Vedic sacrifices, of animals, had practically been given up when the long struggle between Brahmanism and Buddhism reached its close. Isolated instances of such sacrifices are known even down to the Muhammadan invasion. But the battle was really won by the Buddhists and their allies. And the combined ridicule and earnestness of our Sutta will have had its share in bringing about the victory."

This is, perhaps, too optimistic; for it is certain that the sacrifice of animals, under Brahman auspices, lingers in India to-day, for example, at Kalighat. Further, it is worth noting that the sacrifice of the story, which met with such hearty approval from the Buddha's listeners, namely, the pouring of melted butter or oil into the consecrated fire, was more truly the original Vedic sacrifice, as contrasted with the sacrifice of animals, which was probably taken over from the dark races of Southern India.

Finally, Rhys Davids speaks of the long struggle between Brahmanism and Buddhism coming to an end. We should remember that it ended in the complete defeat of the Buddhists, and in their violent expulsion from India, a violence whose heavy Karma still weighs on that afflicted land. Brahman priestcraft was completely triumphant. Though the Buddha may have won the lesser victory, the partial abolition of animal sacrifices, he failed in the great heroic effort, the spiritual redemption of the whole Brahman order with its rich possibilities for good. There have been, and are, many noble and pure-hearted Brahmans; nevertheless, the Brahman order, as a whole, remains a tyrannous and ambitious priestcraft, the greatest barrier to the spiritual regeneration of India.

FRAGMENTS

SILENTLY they come to us across the twilight spaces,—intimations of the spiritual world, dim memories of the past, whispers also out of the future. Silently they come, like lines of golden light upon a sunset lawn; lengthening as they reach us, we of the shadows; creeping toward us, closer and closer as we watch and wonder, until they touch us, touch our feet, our faces, then reach and touch our hearts.

What do we do with them then, when we are conscious of that magical touch, when the sweet pain of its yearning sweeps over us? Are we frightened? Do we find unbearable that stab and quiver, that sense of something strange, that force which holds and compels? Do we struggle to get free of it, to awaken into the understood and wonted? Yes, many times, alas; but God is patient; and the experience returns again and again, with its wealth of opportunity, returns with added reproach and beseeching, with an invitation from which, perhaps, once more we fly.

Yet there it lies across our lives, like golden light across a sunset lawn; and however we turn we cannot forget; however much we deepen our shadows, there remains the memory of that tender glory with all its poignancy of longing and regret.

Some day we shall not deny it; trembling, it may be, but with hope, we shall yield to its embraces. Then we shall have found heaven upon earth, heaven here and beyond: then we shall live in the radiance of union with the Master.

CAVÉ.

THE THEORY OF RELATIVITY*

I HAVE been asked to speak to you to-night upon those recent advances in the field of physics which are revolutionizing the scientific view of the physical universe, and which, as formulated in Einstein's Theory of Relativity, have been given wide notoriety—though little intelligibility—through the public press. It is a theme which is of special interest to students of Theosophy for two reasons. First, because the break-down of the old, accepted theories, and the nature of the new, both confirm, to a remarkable degree, the contentions of Madame Blavatsky as set forth fifty years ago in *Isis Unveiled*, and later in *The Secret Doctrine;* and, second, because it offers an opportunity to make clear the answer to a question which is, perhaps, not often asked explicitly, but which must, none the less, be present in many minds. This question is why we of the Society do not throw more of our weight and effort into the furthering of modern scientific research, but rather seem to hold back from it, though it is so patently pressing toward the very truths which Theosophy has proclaimed and of which the Society was, at one time, almost the only champion in the Western world. The answer is, that knowledge of outer things which is not based upon knowledge of inner things, knowledge which is gained from any other standpoint than that of spiritual reality, must always be deceptive; and intellectual attainment, not rooted in moral attainment, must ultimately act to its possessor's undoing. It was through this unbalancing of man's nature that the great civilizations of the past were destroyed, and the same causes must act always to the same end. Truth, to be truth, must be universal, and knowledge which is sought and found only on the plane of the intellect is thus robbed of that which makes it true. The more accurate such knowledge is, the greater its achievement, its appeal and glamour, the more dangerous it becomes in ensnaring and holding man in the shadow-land of illusion, concealing from him that it is illusion, through its reference of shadows only to shadows, and thus shutting him out from the causal world of the real,—the spiritual world, which alone enables him to rise above the merely relative and temporal, and where, only, he can realize his true being.

I hope that I may be able to return to this question and answer, and to consider the bearing of these new scientific views upon the theosophical philosophy and attitude, but whether it will be possible to do so this evening, or whether it must be postponed to another meeting, I do not know; for I have first the task of attempting to give an intelligible outline of the new theories, and of making clear the change that they require in the habitual concept of the physical world. The readjustments demanded are radical, and at first

* From the stenographic notes of an address before the New York Branch of The Theosophical Society, February 16th, 1929.

seem very strange, so that the task is one of no small difficulty. That I am able to undertake it at all is in large part due to the brilliant expository genius of Professor A. S. Eddington, Plumian Professor of Astronomy in the University of Cambridge, from whose work I shall draw freely. Though his technical *Report on the Relativity Theory of Gravitation* requires more than usual mathematical knowledge, his two popular books upon the subject—*Space, Time and Gravitation*, published in 1923, and *The Nature of the Physical World*, which has just appeared in book form, embodying the series of Gifford Lectures he delivered in the University of Edinburgh in 1927—can be read by anyone who is really interested in the subject.

Revolutionary as is the change in view which the Theory of Relativity asks of us, it is not without precedent. It is directly comparable to that involved in ceasing to think of the earth as fixed and flat, and conceiving it, instead, as a globe in very rapid motion. It is comparable in its difficulties and paradoxes, in its causes, and in its results. How great these difficulties were we do not now often pause to recall, though I fancy most of us encountered some of them in our own childhood when we thought of the antipodes. Lactantius, a contemporary of Constantine and a man of no mean intellectual ability, reflects the attitude of his time towards those who maintained the sphericity of the earth and that people might live upon its other side.

"How can there be anyone so absurd," he says in the *Divinæ Institutiones*, "as to think that men can have their feet higher than their heads; or that in those parts of the earth, instead of resting on the ground, things hang down; crops and trees grow downward; rain, snow and hail fall upward onto the earth? Who indeed can wonder at the hanging gardens, which are reckoned as one of the seven wonders, when the philosophers would have us believe in hanging fields and cities, seas and mountains? . . . If you ask those who maintain these monstrous notions why everything does not fall off into the heavens on that side, they reply that it is of the nature of things that all objects having weight are borne toward the centre, and that everything is connected with the centre, like the spokes of a wheel; while light things, like clouds, smoke and fire, are borne away from the centre and seek the heavens. I scarce know what to say of such fellows who, when once they have wandered from truth, persevere in their foolishness and defend their absurdities by new absurdities. Sometimes I imagine that their philosophizing is all a joke, or that they know the truth well enough and only defend these lies in a perverse attempt to exhibit and exercise their wit."

That is quite the tone and temper of many lay discussions of the modern Relativity Theory. It is the paradoxes which strike us first, and upon which we are most tempted to dwell; but that is not the way in which we can come most quickly to some understanding of the theory itself. For this we must look to what can be said in its favour, rather than in disfavour, and consider the reasons which have led to its adoption. These reasons are, as I have suggested, comparable to those of which Lactantius was so scornful, and to those which later led to the abandonment of the old Ptolemaic system in the

triumph of Galileo and Copernicus. Though it is not the usual method of approach, I believe we can come to the heart of the matter most easily by making use of these parallels.

For the sphericity of the earth, there were good observational reasons,—not apparent in small areas of the earth's surface, but becoming evident when observations at distant points were compared. So far as we can go back in the history of astronomy, we find that the shape of the earth was known to the learned, though not popularly accepted. It was as correctly given in the Ptolemaic as in the Copernican system. For the theory that the earth revolved around the sun, however, there was no observational or experimental evidence whatever. On the contrary, the evidence of the senses was all against it. One could see the sun rise and set; the stars circle through the night, their motion known through the ages, charted and predictable. Copernicus had to overthrow this evidence of the senses, and to point out that in the very nature of things no one could tell from observation whether it was the earth or the heavens which moved. All one could say was that they moved *in relation to each other*. Here he took his stand upon the first principle of Relativity, and challenged his opponents to overthrow him. Of course it supported his view no more than it did theirs, but it nullified the advantage they had had and the evidence on which they had relied. It left a fair field for either theory, so that what actually determined the adoption of the Copernican system was the greater simplicity of the motions it assumed, and the relative ease of mathematical calculation,—these, and the feeling which we all have, but which is often erroneous, that the simpler is the more probable. It seemed far more probable and simple to suppose that the earth was turning on its axis than that all the heavens were revolving around it; and by assuming that it revolved around the sun, the complicated epicycloids of the apparent motion of the planets could be reduced to simple circles or ellipses. It was then simplicity, and only simplicity, that led us to the theory that the earth moved round the sun, instead of the sun moving round the earth. In all other ways the system of Ptolemy was as accurate, as successful in predicting events, as that of Copernicus,—and was far more closely in accord with the familiar appearance of things; for to trace the motion of the stars as we see them, we have still to translate back from Copernicus to Ptolemy.

But what if the sun itself be also moving? Let us think for a moment of the way in which motions compound. We are on a train; when, as Eddington says, we look out of the window and see a cow gliding past at fifty miles an hour, "we remark that the creature is enjoying a rest." The train draws out from the depot; we walk back along the aisle, moving with regard to the train, but, for a time, keeping abreast of the same point in the platform. The platform itself is moving with the motion of the earth, turning around the earth's axis, hurtling through space around the sun; and there is no reason to assume that the sun itself is at rest. What is at rest? What is our actual motion? May all these different motions actually nullify one another? Is there any means of telling?

This is the question that Michelson and Morley asked themselves forty years ago, and thought that they had found a way to answer it. It is a well known fact, easily proved by arithmetical calculation or experiment, that it takes less time to swim a hundred yards across the current of a river and back, than it does to swim a hundred yards up or down stream and back. You go through more water, in that sense your course is longer, in the latter case than in the former. If then, as science supposes, the earth is moving through the æther like a boat through the water, or, what is the same thing, if the æther be flowing past the earth, it should take a swimmer in the æther longer to go a given distance and back in the direction of the earth's motion, than to go the same distance and back at right angles to that motion. Michelson and Morley performed this experiment of racing two beams of light, as swimmers in the æther, to distant mirrors and back over courses at right angles to each other. They confidently expected that one would return before the other, and that so the direction of the earth's motion through the æther would be determined. Greatly to their surprise the result was a dead-heat. They turned the apparatus around and tried it again, but with the same result. The two rays returned at the same time. They waited six months, so that the earth's motion around the sun should have reversed its direction; but again there was a tie. This negative result appeared to contradict all theory and experience. Two equal runners are set unequal courses, yet return at the same time. How explain the contradiction?

For a while there was no explanation. If we can imagine that Ptolemy and Copernicus were watching the experiment, it may be supposed that Ptolemy would have had his revenge; for if the race appeared to prove anything, it seemed to prove that the earth was at rest in the æther,—that Copernicus was wrong and that Ptolemy had been right. But by this time the concept of the earth's motion has been too closely interwoven into the whole fabric of science to be easily extricated, and, so far as I know, the possibility was never even suggested. The negative results of the Michelson-Morley experiment, and of others which confirmed them, remained a mystery until FitzGerald advanced the theory that our ideas and measurements of length were themselves dependent upon motion, and that the handicap which it had been thought had been imposed upon one of the two beams of light was therefore illusory. It had been made to travel more miles, but each "mile" had been shortened.

This at first seems a very wild assumption, but we must remember that all our measurements of length are ultimately equivalent to measurements with a foot rule or yard stick—the application of a rigid rod, end to end over the distance to be measured,—and so depend upon the assumption that that rigid rod maintains the same length. Now we know that certain things, temperature for instance, change the length of the rod. The length of the rod represents, in the scientific view, a balance between the forces drawing its particles together, and the motions which tend to keep them apart. To increase the temperature is to increase the motions, and so to lengthen the rod. This is

understood and allowed for, the length of the rod being "corrected" for temperature. But it had not occurred to anyone, before, that a similar allowance might have to be made for any increase in the forces drawing the particles together. These forces are of an electro-magnetic character. The particles are charged with electricity, and when an electric charge is set in motion it generates a magnetic field, or force. This magnetic force acts to draw the particles closer together in the direction of the motion given to the rod, so that when it is moved in the direction of its length, it becomes shorter than when it is moved at right angles to its length. For small velocities the contraction is negligible, but for large velocities it is by no means negligible. Calculated theoretically, upon the basis of Maxwell's electro-magnetic laws, it is found to be exactly what is required to account for the result of the Michelson-Morley experiment. The increased number of metres, which had to be traversed by the ray in the direction of the earth's motion, was exactly balanced by the shortening of each metre along that course.

This introduces us into *Alice in Wonderland*. As I point my walking stick in one direction or another its length changes. I turn my body and grow thin and broad, or deep of chest and narrow of shoulder. I lie down on a bed with my head to the north and am of different length than when I sleep with my head to the east. Why do we not notice it? Because everything keeps the same scale, the same appearance, and so the fact is concealed from us,—at least this is the explanation that Relativists ask us to accept. But as they point out that all motion is relative, the effects of motion must also be relative, and therefore would only exist for an observer with respect to whom we were in rapid motion, as we are not in respect to one another. The result would, we are to suppose, be very noticeable to some observer on another planet, or to the consciousness of a "beta" particle shooting by us at something less than the speed of light. But to ourselves, our own motion, and the effects which it may produce, cannot be apparent. One effect must always neutralize another. This is what has been called the first or restricted Principle of Relativity: "It is impossible by any experiment to detect uniform motion relative to the æther."

Indeed, if we try to think of what motion through a perfectly continuous and homogeneous medium might mean to us, we shall find the idea replete with difficulties. We can think of motion through water, because we conceive of water as composed of particles. We leave one particle behind and come to another. But we cannot do this if there be no particles—if all be homogeneous and continuous. As Madame Blavatsky long since pointed out, the scientific conception of the æther is a congeries of mutually contradictory properties, and science to-day confesses this. It is a highly illogical conception, though it has been a useful one; and there is every indication that it must be revised—as Madame Blavatsky contended.

The *General* Relativity Theory—as distinct from the first, restricted theory —may be approached, not through the motion of the earth, but through its sphericity; for this theory has, as one of its first and most important results,

the idea that space itself must be regarded as curved, not as flat. We want to find out what that involves, because it must be a quite unintelligible statement to the ordinary man. Let us, therefore, consider the position of the "ordinary man," who in the past thought of the world as flat, and see what he had to do to conceive of its surface as the surface of a sphere.

The first thing to notice is that, in the primitive conception, the earth was really thought of as extending only in two dimensions,—in the horizontal directions in which men were free to move around (mountains being mere irregularities). As we have said, we know no time in history when this was the conception of the learned, but it was the practical notion of the ordinary man. A third dimension was of course known to him, the up and down direction; but this was not directly associated in his mind with the idea of surface extension, but rather with *thickness*, the distance down to the back of the turtle, or the shoulders of Atlas, with which he was not practically concerned. He knew about it but disregarded it. The first thing he had to do, in order to understand the views of the learned, was to give heed to this disregarded dimension and to add it to the other two, turning his attention away, for the time being, from the mere surface of the earth, and thinking of its solid substance as extending in all three dimensions at once. When he had done this, and had the solid in his mind's eye, he could recarve a surface for it in any way he chose, and the "scientific" view, that the true surface was a spherical one, was no longer difficult of comprehension. What he had thought of as a plane, simply curved around through the dimension he had been neglecting.

We are asked to follow the same process with regard to space itself, but one step higher up. We have been thinking of extension as three-dimensional, embracing north and south, east and west, up and down. We, too, are cognizant of another dimension, but we have not commonly thought of it in connection with the extension of space,—only as a sort of "thickness" of space, *duration* in time. We have to put all these four dimensions together, and think of *duration in space*, "space-time," as a single whole, thus making our idea of extension a four-fold thing where now it is generally but three-fold.

This is, of course, a very familiar concept to students of Theosophy. Madame Blavatsky presents it at the very beginning of *The Secret Doctrine*, and stresses it over and over again. "The real person or thing does not consist solely of what is seen at any particular moment, but is composed of the sum of all its various and changing conditions from its appearance in the material form to its disappearance from the earth. It is these 'sum totals' that exist from eternity in the 'future' and pass by degrees through matter to exist for eternity in the 'past'. No one would say that a bar of metal dropped into the sea came into existence as it left the air, and ceased to exist as it entered the water, and that the bar itself consisted only of that cross-section thereof which at any given moment coincided with the mathematical plane that separates, and at the same time joins, the atmosphere and the ocean. Even so of persons and things, which, dropping out of the to-be into the has-been,

out of the future into the past, present momentarily to our senses a cross-section, as it were, of their total selves, as they pass through time and space (as matter) on their way from one eternity to another: and these two constitute that 'duration' in which alone anything has true existence, were our senses but able to cognize it there" (*The Secret Doctrine*, Ed. 1888, p. 37). Science has not learned to make the use of this concept that Theosophy does, but it is at least now recognizing its necessity.

Let us think of the life of anyone we loved, who is now dead. It is present to us in a unity it did not always seem to manifest in life; the succession of temporal states have become merged into one enduring whole. Or again, think of a book—the biography of George Washington, let us say. We can imagine that each page of the biography gives a picture or an account of Washington, and of his actions and environment, at a certain time, stratifying his life, as it were, into a succession of temporal states. Those leaves of the book illustrate our own ordinary notion of temporal existence. Here is a certain condition of affairs, here and now. Here are all these space relations, existing now. At another moment there is another set of space relations. We have stratified our life into a succession of temporal states just as the leaves of the book stratify the life of George Washington. But it is the book as a whole that is his biography, and this stratification is artificial and arbitrary. We can conceive of it as having been written, and consequently stratified, in a very different way: George Washington as soldier, as statesman, as mystic. The temporal sequence need not be observed, but may be cut across in many ways, once we have before us the whole life of the man. It is this whole, unified life, that it is important to grasp. So Eddington says, "We shall see more clearly the real mechanism of the physical world if we can rid our minds of this illusion of stratification. The world that then stands revealed, though strangely unfamiliar, is actually much simpler. There is a difference between simplicity and familiarity. A pig may be most familiar to us in the form of rashers, but the unstratified pig is a simpler object to the biologist who wishes to understand how the animal functions."

We may see from this how, once we have put space and time together, we may recarve them in new forms, no longer in flat stratifications, but in what would correspond to curved surfaces,—space curving, as it were, through the dimension of time. We may see, too, that it should be possible to do this in many different ways; so that what is pure time, for one man, might be a mingling of space and time for another,—that the direction of time is not rigidly fixed and the same for all, under all conditions. There is nothing new to us in the thought that Washington's life as mystic may have proceeded at a very different pace and in a direction different from his life as soldier or householder; or that those who approached him differently should measure him by different standards and mark his progress by a different time-sequence of events. Men are for ever measuring others by themselves, and their judgments tell us as much about them as about those they judge. This is not new, but what is new is that physical science should have begun to recog-

nize that these differences, and dependence of the judgment on the judge, have their direct correspondences in the physical world; and that the most material properties of "inanimate" bodies, their mass and energy, their size and shape, their presence in the "past" or "future"—all those qualities which seemed most constant and independent of the personal colouring of our consciousness—are relative, and vary with the motion of the beholder, though this beholder be but a mechanical, scientific instrument in a laboratory. Science, it is true, has not yet recognized that this relativity and mutability of the outer world is but the reflection of the richness and depth of the inner world—and therein lies our quarrel with science; but it has at least begun to recognize that the outer world has no permanence and definiteness of its own; that it is but a shadow-land of shifting symbols.

We said, a moment ago, that what is merely time for one man may be a mingling of time and space for another. Professor Eddington illustrates this by a clock striking the hours. Our clock here has just struck nine; an hour from now it will strike again; and for us these will be two events which, occurring in the same place, were separated only in time,—an hour apart. But for an observer on the sun, if we imagine him to see the fall of the hammers, the two events would not have occurred in the same place, but about seventy thousand miles apart, for that is approximately the distance that the earth travels in an hour on its orbit around the sun. When we speak of a "distant event," we may mean "distant" in space, or in time, or in both, for both separate events. The Relativist, seeking greater definiteness, speaks of the "interval" between two events, this interval being made up of two components, one of space and one of time. Its measurement is a matter of the geometry of space-time; but, as we have just seen, each of its two components is relative, and different observers, in different states of motion, would divide them up differently. This opens a very fruitful field of paradox, where it would be amusing and interesting to linger, if we had not so much else claiming our attention. But as it is, we must seek the simplest view, and this is perhaps offered by the analogy that we used before. When our predecessors began to think of the earth as a sphere, they had to realize that what were "horizontal" and "vertical" for a man in one latitude were quite different from what they were at another. Between the pole and the equator they would be completely reversed. At the equator the North Star would be on the horizon; at the pole it would be directly overhead. This may make it seem less extraordinary that space and time should be relative in the same way.

But there is a real difference between them, just as there is a real difference between horizontal and vertical, a difference that we cannot ignore. As the force of gravity acts vertically, not horizontally, upon us, so time acts on us as space does not. Though we put time and space together into a single whole, it does not mean that they may therefore be indiscriminately confused and recarved in *any* way. Our notion of time is really dual. There is an inner time and an outer time, and we cannot take the liberties with the inner that we can with the outer. As the two are not unrelated, there are limits to

what we can do even with the outer. After all, time, as distinct from duration, depends upon the law of cycles, upon recurring phenomena. We measure it by things which recur: by our breath, by our pulse, by the phases of the moon, by days and years, by the beating of a pendulum and the revolutions of the hands of a clock. It is a marvel that so many of these hang together as well as they do. It is perfectly patent that time measured by our pulse does not always agree with that measured by the moon, nor does the time of our inner experience always jibe with Naval-Observatory time. It has been the habit of "the ordinary man" to think rather slightingly of the time of inner experience, as something purely personal and relative; but science is now assuring him that it is really the Observatory time that is "relative".

We must come now to gravitation, and here I must explicitly remind you of what I sincerely hope you have realized all along, that I am doing my best to present a definite scientific theory, which has rapidly gained favour and has received very striking confirmations; but these confirmations do not prove that it is correct in all its assumptions, and as it stands, and as I shall try to portray it, it is neither my own view nor that of Theosophy. In certain particulars, notably in its abandonment of the classic form of Newton's laws, it is in accord with some of Madame Blavatsky's contentions; but in others it does not accord. Nor is it probable that it has yet been given its final form. Within the past month, Einstein has announced an extension and modification, and there is every likelihood that others will follow.

We can again approach our problem through a comparison with that which faced our predecessors. When the earth was thought of as flat, gravitation could be stated very simply: things tended to fall down if they were not held up. It was simple, universal and in perfect accord with experience; everybody knew and understood it. But when the earth was found to be a sphere, it was obvious that this simple law was too simple to fit the facts. Either things fell "up" on the other side of the earth, or what was meant by "down" had to be redefined, and instead of being a fixed direction, the same everywhere and for all things, "down" had to be seen as a merely relative and local thing, different at every different point on the earth's surface, different, too, at every different moment of time. This changed the meaning from a spacial or geometrical concept to something dependent upon matter—a pointer directed to matter, to the centre of the earth, wherever the earth was and wherever the pointer was. Gravitation no longer appeared as a universal and uniform law, describing how everything tended to move in empty space, but as a local phenomenon, or disturbance of the uniform condition, due to the influence of the earth. Newton's great achievement was, of course, that he conceived a similar disturbance to be created by all matter, not only by the earth; and this restored to gravitation something of the generality it had had in the primitive concept. But it did not restore all of that generality, for now it was dependent upon the presence of matter where before it had not been so conceived. It was now a physical concept instead of a geometric concept. This completely robbed it of its primitive simplicity and uniformity.

Standing on a flat earth, the ordinary man had seen everything tending to fall vertically downward, tending, if left to themselves, to move in parallel lines perpendicular to the flat surface on which he stood. In the new theory these parallel lines were all taken away and replaced by star-rays, radiating from every centre of matter and criss-crossing one another in a most bewildering and inextricable manner. Instead of a neatly ruled space, across which the crystal globes of the heavens majestically revolved, he had a dotted and spotty space, each dot pulling against every other dot and trying to draw to itself whatever its influence could reach. It seems a most unattractive picture, as the plain man must have seen it.

Perhaps this old notion of ruled lines persisted in Newton's mind when he formulated his first law of motion: "all bodies tend to remain at rest or in uniform motion in a straight line, except in so far as they are compelled to change that state by an external force." But the trouble was that, once we had abandoned the idea of a fixed, flat earth, it was perfectly apparent that, whether bodies *tended* to move in straight lines or not, we could find no body that did *actually* so move. Nor could we find any that remained at rest. Therefore, if Newton's law of motion was to hold, *every* body must *always* be acted upon by an external force. The ever present, always active force, whose necessity was thus perceived, was called gravitation.

Professor Eddington invites us to examine this reasoning. Everything, the teacher says, tends to move in a straight line. How do we know this? We throw a stone, and it does not move in a straight line. Yes, the teacher comments, that is because gravity pulls it down. How do we know gravity pulls it down? Because if gravity did not, the stone would move in a straight line. The argument is clearly circular; the only support of either assumption is in the other. The Relativist, pointing this out, points out also the logical conclusion: that this universal mystery of Newtonian gravitation, which has puzzled the human mind for centuries, which we could explain neither by "direct action at a distance", nor account for, without contradictions, as a strain in the intervening medium,—that this mystery was not something inherent in the nature of the universe, but was only inherent in Newton's assumptions; that, in plain terms, instead of being a natural force, it was the mathematical correction that had to be applied in order to reconcile the way in which Newton said that bodies tend to move, with the way in which they actually do move. As Professor Eddington remarks, the suggestion that bodies (like people) really want to go straight, but some mysterious agent makes them go crooked, is picturesque but unscientific.

Questions of motion are mostly questions of geometry. On a plane, for example, one can move in a straight line; but one cannot do that on the surface of a sphere. There, the best one can do is to move on a "great circle", the shortest (or longest) distance between two points. Relativity, therefore, observing that bodies do not move in straight lines but in curves, and appear to move differently in the neighbourhood of matter than when at remote distances from it, asks what kind of a geometry of space-time (for time must

be involved as well as space) would account for this, so that bodies should tend to move as they do move. The question may admit of more than one answer. Basing his work upon that of Minkowski, and approaching the problem as one of pure mathematics, Einstein has found several different solutions. Though differing in detail, however, they are all of the same character, and have successively "explained" geometrically a widening range of physical phenomena. As a result, gravitation was first identified with inertia, and, within the last few weeks, with electro-magnetic phenomena as well,—as Madame Blavatsky always said it should be. The mathematics cannot concern us here, and our imaginations do not function very easily in the four-dimensional space-time with which the mathematics deals. But if we content ourselves with trying to draw a sort of two-dimensional picture, representing space as a surface, it is not hard to form a rough idea of what that surface should be like. In the first place, it must be curved,—not flat; and, where there is no matter, this curvature must be smooth and uniform. But wherever there is matter, there must be a hummock, or hill, breaking the smooth curvature. If you tried to walk across such a surface, these hummocks would deflect your course, and your path in their vicinity would have a different curvature. Relativity theory, therefore, returns to a geometrical picture of gravitation; but instead of the flat space and ruled vertical lines of the primitive picture, it has a curved, hummocky space, and curved lines, and it contends that the Newtonian conception was the result of trying to force this curved, hummocky surface to lie flat on a plane.

This has been illustrated by the distortion that inevitably appears whenever we try to draw a flat map of a considerable portion of the earth's surface. For small areas, the distortion is negligible; but for large areas, if we preserve one feature, we inevitably distort some other. Most maps are drawn so as to preserve direction: that is, the north and south lines run parallel up and down the page. Now on the surface of the earth itself these lines are parallel at the equator, but all come together at the pole. On the map they are kept parallel, and the consequence is that a little circle around the pole is stretched out to the size of the equator, and all the northern regions are absurdly exaggerated in size. Professor Eddington asks us to imagine how this would be interpreted by some ancient inhabitant of Greece, let us say, who adhered to the flat-earth theory and had found that flat maps represented quite correctly his own familiar country. He would naturally assume that they were equally correct in their representation of Greenland, and that the distances shown in his map were the true distances. But if he were to travel in Greenland, he would find that these distances certainly seemed much shorter than they "really" were as given on his scientific map. He would find that he walked very much faster in Greenland than in Greece, and was able to travel in a day what would have taken him weeks at home. How would he explain this? Professor Eddington suggests that if he were an ordinary man of his time, he would suppose that there was a demon living in Greenland who helped travellers on their way; but that if he were a scientist he would "invent a

Græco-Latin polysyllable" to denote the mysterious force or agency which made the journeys seem so short. Relativity exorcises the demon of gravitation by pointing out the curvature of the physical world.

When we put together time and space into a single whole, it is necessary to devise some common measure, or means of comparing distances in time with distances in space. In Relativity theory this is done through the velocity of light, which is about 186,000 miles a second, so that one second of time, what seems to us a very short period of time, corresponds to 186,000 miles, which seems to most of us, who are not astronomers, a fairly long distance in space. If we try to imagine what a single second of our bodily existence would look like in space-time, we must see it as very small—no more than a few feet—in the space directions, but as stretching out 186,000 miles in the time direction. When we realize that to picture our whole physical life, from birth to death, we should have to multiply this length by the number of seconds our life lasts, we reach an idea in rather startling contrast to our ordinary notion that "life is short". It has been likened to an earth worm; but it is a very thin and very elongated earth worm. It is often called our "world-line" stretching through time and space. Every physical body can be so represented.

This affords us another way of illustrating gravitation geometrically. As we did before with space alone, let us now try to imagine a surface model of space-time. We shall have to condense all three dimensions of space into one, representing extension in space by distances measured along one edge of this table top, and extension in time by distances measured along the other edge, at right angles to the first. The table cover, lying flat, would then serve to represent a flat space-time, in regions where there was no matter. Now let us try to introduce the picture of two material bodies in that space-time. We can do this by making two ridges or wrinkles in the table cover, taking care to keep the rest of the cover smooth. As we trace their course, running back from the front edge of the table (along the time direction), these wrinkles may approach or diverge, just as any two bodies may approach or diverge. Of special interest to us, however, is the fact that they can run parallel. This is in flat space-time. But, Professor Eddington points out, if we try to make two similar puckers or wrinkles in a cloth lying on a curved instead of a plane surface, we shall find that it is not so easy to make them run parallel and to keep the rest of the cloth smooth. My coat sleeve wrinkles at the elbow, but those wrinkles do not run parallel; they run together, just as two bodies tend to do.

I have but a few minutes left of the hour generously allowed me, and despite my best efforts the hour proves all too short for even the bare outline I have attempted. I have, of course, had to omit far more than I could suggest; particularly I have slighted the paradoxes with which Relativity Theory is replete. It is these which are usually dwelt upon when Relativity is discussed; but it seems to me that if they are introduced before the central ideas are grasped, they tend to obscure rather than to clarify the subject. Therefore,

I have deliberately omitted them. There are, however, certain conclusions, to which the theory leads, that I ought not to omit, though I can do no more than note them,—since an adequate discussion of any one would require an evening in itself. As you hear them, they will remind you of familiar tenets of Theosophy, and it is distinctly interesting that they should now be advanced by a growing school of modern science as revolutionary discoveries. Once more I must remind you that they are not my conclusions, but those which science is now advancing.

1. The first point I would note, the most significant and profound change in the scientific view is *the disappearance of causality from the physical world.* Force could be regarded as causal; but geometry can scarcely be so regarded. Physical science, in becoming geometrical, has thus become purely descriptive, abandoning all effort to find or deal with causes. It sees the physical world as but a "shadow-land". Professor Eddington insists upon this over and over again. It has no causal properties; it merely registers effects. Nor has it any "reality" in itself. Professor Eddington is not quite sure what others mean when they use the word "reality"; but, in his own thought, that which lies behind the physical universe must be something in the nature of "mind-stuff", not always, perhaps, rising to the level of consciousness (or self-consciousness), but still of the same nature as our own minds, which give a significance to the physical world it would not otherwise have.

2. Cyclic law is imbedded in the stuff and shape of nature. All things move in cycles; and as cycles are the basis of time—in contradistinction to duration —time is relative, as cycles are relative.

3. Space-time (manifestation) is not flat but curved, returning upon itself through a great sweep that yet is not infinite,—like the return upon itself of the surface of a sphere whose radius is in the neighbourhood of a thousand million light-years (a light-second being 186,000 miles). The physical universe is thus finite, but unbounded. All that reaches us physically, all that our senses can perceive, comes to us from within this sphere. Its centre is everywhere; its boundary nowhere. So Theosophy has spoken of the "Egg of Brahma", and of the great cycles or Maha Kalpas of manifestation.

4. The physical universe has a grain in its structure, like the grain in rocks or trees, which is not merely relative, but inherent, and the same for all. This grain is revealed by the track of light, and the velocity of light is the limit which the velocities of material particles may approach, but never reach. At the velocity of light, mass and inertia become mathematically infinite, and time stops. "Let there be light" formed the grain, the structural lines of all that followed.

5. The light and heat and magnetism which radiate from a star out into space, and which are not intercepted and absorbed by other bodies, return again, through the curvature of space-time, to reconverge at the point of their departure. Thus there may be "ghost stars", indistinguishable from a substantial star as a source of light and heat, but in which there is no physical substance. So Theosophy traces the reconvergence of the skandhas,

the nucleus for the rebirth, or reincarnation, alike of stars and men and universes.

6. Matter has become wholly immaterial, unsubstantial. Mass and energy are inter-convertible and pass one into the other. Inertia, gravity, electro-magnetism, are likewise seen as different aspects of one another, and all are relative, the aspect that they show, or the effect that they appear to produce, depending upon the motion of the observer.

7. In all physical experiments and measurements of space and time and mass and force, we either gain only relative knowledge or else discover we are facing a mere truism. The reason for this is that we are viewing, or *attempting to view the physical universe from within the physical universe*, and are thus always measuring things against themselves. Our very notion of "length" is derived from what we try to measure by that notion. It is thus like measuring a length by taking as a unit a fixed fraction of that length. Everything is four fourths of itself, or ten tenths of itself. Such measurements yield mere truisms; and all purely physical "laws" are no more than such truisms.

Over and over again Madame Blavatsky contended that no real knowledge of any plane of being could be gained from within that plane; that to see it truly, and as it is, it must be seen from above. This is fundamental in the whole procedure of occultism. Relativity theory—or more truly, as I believe, the genius of Professor Eddington working on that theory—now enunciates the same conclusion. It, too, insists that no real knowledge can be gained that way. There are no true and independent standards by which to measure. The causes operative are not there. It is a mere shadow-land; but science has not yet recognized that the more we compare shadows with shadows, the less we perceive the one important thing about them that it behooves us most to perceive—the fact that they are shadows.

They are of significance only in that they are shadows of something real; and that reality is to be seen, not by looking at the shadow or where it falls, but by turning ourselves about until we face that which casts the shadow. To become absorbed in the play of shadows, to think of them as our own world, and to identify ourselves with them, is to make ourselves, also, but the shadow of ourselves.

The one outstanding merit of Relativity Theory is that it makes it so easy for us to see this; to recognize the shadowy emptiness of the physical world, and so to turn away from it to the world of causal reality—to the world of spiritual consciousness and spiritual being—to the world to which Theosophy points and to which it would lead us.

HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL.

WAR MEMORIES

III

"The Race To The Sea"

ABOUT the middle of September, 1914, the world began to waken to a realization of the fact (still only dimly felt, however) that the War was entering a new phase; that the theatre of the fiercest conflict was to change, and those of us in England who were straining at the leash in our eagerness to get "over there", breathlessly snatched at any and all news which came from the front. Looking back upon that time, now that the years have given us not only a clearer knowledge of the actual military situation, denied us at the moment, but also a perspective, we can see that the rapidly moving and seemingly tangled events, so bewildering at all times to civilians, were in reality steadily shaping themselves into an orderly plan. The Germans had failed to reach Paris, and the Battle of the Marne had been followed by the Battle of the Aisne, which has often been spoken of as a transition battle; but while the enemy had succeeded in forming a new line stretching eastward from Noyon to Verdun, and was attempting a new offensive, hoping to bring about the decisive victory which they had failed to win at the Marne, the French High Command began their great flanking movement west of the Oise, turning around the German right, aiming first at St. Quentin in the hope of cutting off one of the chief lines of communication, then heading north toward Flanders. The Germans, of course, recognized the new danger. If the Allies should reach Belgium, they would join the Belgian Field Army still guarding Antwerp and stretching along the Scheldt, and the German occupation of Belgium would become very precarious indeed; further, and of well nigh equal concern, all hope of taking the Channel ports—which it was now realized should have been taken at a much earlier stage of the War, when it would have been comparatively easy—all chance of seizing this most important strategic position, opposite the English coast, would be lost, and a trench deadlock would ensue. Hence during the latter half of September began the first phase of the "race to the sea", now so famous in history; that dash northwards by the two opposing forces, in their gigantic struggle each to outflank the other, the result being an incredibly swift extension of the active front almost due north and south, instead of west and east, as formerly. If the Germans won in this desperate race; if they could seize Antwerp and annihilate the little Belgian Army, it would enable them to wheel sharply to the west, and by quick marching reach the coast (where in late September there was still a wide stretch of country between the Allied line and the sea) and sweep southward, seizing the Channel ports as they went, Calais being the special objective.

This is a very crude outline, even though viewed as it is now in retrospect, of the general military situation at the time that I first went to Belgium. Of course, only military experts could guess what was taking place. Civilians like myself, living in the very midst of the bewildering comings and goings of troops, could have only a vague and general idea of what was actually happening—even if we had had the time to think much about it. We saw but a small corner of the vast drama which was unrolling; the particular small corner where our work placed us, and I speak of this great phase of the War merely because it may be well to remind those who have momentarily forgotten the mighty "race to the sea", what that "race" really was, and what it meant; also because it naturally affected everything that we who were working in Belgium wanted to do or tried to do.

I have said that during the first days of the War I joined some Red Cross classes in London, in the hope of getting abroad with a recognized unit, but that, when the classes came to an end, there followed an unaccountable pause, a sudden cessation of activities. We were all left, as it were, dangling in mid air. The organizer of the classes had been an acquaintance of mine in pre-War days, and she had urged me to join them, telling me that she had every reason to expect an Ambulance Corps to be formed from those students who successfully survived the examinations, a Corps which would probably be sent to Belgium. I now determined to go to her boldly and ask what the trouble was, and what her next move would be, for I was sufficiently "informed" to realize that one must have an official excuse for getting abroad; without it one would find it almost impossible to secure the necessary *visa*. The trouble turned out to be the not unusual one—misunderstanding with the Higher Authorities. "Red Tape" again. But she had not given up all hope of her Ambulance Corps, for she was leaving London early the next morning, alone, for Belgium, to "look over the ground" with an eye to establishing a foothold.

"I am convinced that the great thing is to be on the spot," she said. "No earthly use to be planning work on one side of the Channel, when you yourself are on the other."

"That is exactly my idea," I exclaimed, "I'm going with you."

There followed a somewhat animated discussion. She preferred, not unnaturally, to go alone, since she had no idea what she would be getting into "over there", and I felt that she owed me at least this chance, since after all, she had urged me to join her classes, and I had in consequence lost all that good time. I frankly told her that I was merely making her my "official excuse", because once in Belgium I had no intention whatever of volunteering in her Ambulance Corps unless it materialized immediately. Once on Belgian soil I intended to strike out for myself. On this basis she agreed to my joining her.

So it came about that on that late September morning, after a rather

hectic night spent in hurried preparations for the unimaginable venture on which I was embarking, I found myself, with a heavy tweed coat and a small hand bag (my only equipment) on the Ostende departure platform of Victoria Station, looking for my travelling companion. She came beaming cheerily through the queer, mixed crowd, evidently reconciled by this time to my presence. The platform was packed with every conceivable kind of traveller —save one. The usual tourist was conspicuous by his absence; it was no place for him; or, if he was there, he had been transformed beyond recognition into something serviceable. There were, of course, officers returning to the front; nurses going out either for the first time or after a short period of rest; war correspondents; chaplains; non-descript men in innocuous Norfolk jackets, who did not "look the part", though somehow you knew that the Norfolk jacket was disguising a real mission; women in indescribable attire, half masculine, half feminine, for in those first weeks, before so much individual effort ceased to be purely individual and became organized (and that meant an acknowledged uniform), many of us snatched at whatever we thought would be practical, appropriate, and indicative of that into which we hoped we were plunging. It was a strange medley; men and women of all degrees and kinds, outwardly perfect strangers, yet held together in the grip of one consuming desire—to be "in it", "to serve". So this morning, toward the end of September, we gathered on that departure platform of Victoria station, saying our last words, or taking our last look at the dear old barn of a terminus. Then the guard gave his signal; in got the stragglers; we waved good-bye to real or imaginary friends standing there, and off we were—to what?

The crossing was uneventful, we reached Ostende in safety, and by great good fortune at once secured the *laissez-passer* enabling us to push on to Ghent, which was our destination. The military authorities, knowing what we had come for (our passports told that clearly enough, and we had valuable letters besides), offered us the necessary transport in an east bound military car just leaving, so we were soon under way, tearing over the broad Ostende-Bruges-Ghent highroad in the gathering dusk and the deepening shadows of the night; racing through the open country side with its wide, serene expanses —those "Flanders Fields" as yet undyed with blood; dashing at breakneck speed through hamlet and village and town; into Bruges and out again, through Eecloo,—and Ghent at last. It was, of course, full night by now, and the town itself was dark—too near the firing line for much illumination to be safe; there were villages little more than four miles away where desperate fighting was going on. We were fortunate in finding an hotel which could squeeze us in, and we went to bed wondering if we had ever passed a day so packed with a variety of emotions as that day had been.

The next morning, after each getting a *permis de séjour*, we parted, as we had agreed we would do on arrival; my travelling companion went in search of information regarding her cherished Ambulance Corps scheme (which I may say was never, so far as I know, heard of again), and I went out to look for an occupation such as would justify my being in Ghent at all at this time.

If before leaving London, I had had any misgivings about being able to find immediate and useful employment, these misgivings were soon dissipated. There was work and to spare in helping to feed and tend the refugees who were pouring into Ghent by every road from the east. They came washing in on the flood-tide of calamity, terror-stricken yet dumb at the horrors they had seen, at the immensity of the disaster, at the swiftness of their own utter ruin; and Ghent, the lovely, dreamy old town of pre-War days, turned itself generously into a vast asylum, transforming the great *Palais des Fêtes* (grim irony!) into a place where at least they had a roof over their poor heads, where they lay, bedded on straw hastily put down on the floors of the great halls; packed so close, men and women and children, that at dusk (which it was when I first saw them) you could hardly distinguish their separate forms. There was no privacy, not even decency for most, and the clean, wholesome out-of-door life they were accustomed to, had been changed into what inevitably became irksome and wearisome surroundings. The first night that I went there, which was the night after my arrival, there were nearly eleven thousand, if I remember correctly, and they were still pouring in. Some of these poor creatures, after a day or two, or as soon as they were able to walk again, got up and staggered westward to the sea, and so by boat to England, or south, on foot, into France; others lay inert, too stunned to care what became of them,—lay inert until the fall of Antwerp and the evacuation of Ghent, when, joining the fresh, on-rushing tide of human misery, they fled.

The stories that they brought were so black, so foul, so unspeakable, that, had it not been for the look in their faces (a look strangely alike in all, as though the profundity of their suffering had gone to the very roots of Being, unifying them, giving them a kind of mysterious and tragic sameness)—had it not been for that look, you would hardly have been able to believe what was told you. One cannot repeat most of these tales, they are too iniquitous, but the many War records will tell the truth about these inconceivable outrages. Day after day, of those first days of mine in Ghent, I watched these poor human derelicts come crushing, thronging, surging. They had been herded in front of marching German troops, a human screen to protect the enemy which had ruined them; they had seen those they loved shot dead while praying at the foot of their wayside shrines,—shot dead for no reason other than the lust of blood; they had watched their wives and children driven into their cellars, there to be burnt alive, or driven out of their cellars where they had sought shelter, into the village square—to be butchered. Faint with exhaustion they came, many of them with terrible gaping wounds which, in the precipitate flight, had not been tended; bayonet thrusts and jagged wounds made by flying shrapnel, where human flesh had been torn to rags. Those who could not walk, and for whom there was not even primitive transport, came limping or almost crawling; children were born by the wayside, young girls and women and old men, with injuries past healing, fell and died where they fell, and remained there, still and deserted, just as they had fallen, while the endless caravan of human woe passed on, and left them. Perhaps

they were happier to have died. Sometimes they came in families, sometimes utterly alone. I have seen young women carrying babies scarcely two days old, hardly able to drag themselves along, and you asked: where were their husbands, their brothers? At the front, they supposed. Was there no one to care for them? Where were their parents? They had seen them dragged out and shot only yesterday. How had they themselves escaped? They did not know,—*le bon Dieu* had saved them, they supposed. An old man, bent and silent, holding the hand of a little girl of three or four, who was trotting, trotting by his side—the poor little trotting feet of the weary child forced to move faster than little feet can go. Where was the child's mother? you asked. He did not know. Was it his grandchild? No. He did not know to whom the child belonged, or even where she had come from; what village she had lived in. He had just found her trotting, trotting, in the midst of the great on-sweeping crowds, choked with dust, dropping for lack of sleep and with fatigue,—lost. We all know the pitiful stories of the lost children of Belgium; but it is a terrible thing to remember them as they actually were and looked at that time. Quite as terrible were the women who had lost their children, who had in an unaccountable way been separated from them. The hungry mother-look in the eyes of some of these women was a thing you could never forget. Most terrible of all, however, worse than anything I saw during the whole course of the War, were the children utterly crazed with the horror of what they had seen, or wantonly mutilated by abominable and hellish cruelty.

So day and night the fugitives came swarming in, from Termonde, Alost, Lokeren and beyond, and all with that strange look branded on their faces. What were they going to do now that they had come to Ghent? you would ask. They did not know. If Ghent were to be evacuated, where would they go then? They did not know. If their home village had been burnt, where would they live when the War was over? (We thought at that time it would be over soon.) They did not know. Their own misery seemed in a curious way to interest them little, so stunned were they, but if you spoke to them of the injury to their country (I have heard many workers among the refugees remark on this), they were roused immediately, for one of the finest qualities in the Belgian character is an intense and fiery patriotism. Their country had done right not to let the Germans pass, but why had the Germans come? Then question would follow question, over and over, in a kind of horrible nightmare repetition: What does it mean? What has our little Belgium done? Why has this happened? We do not understand. Yesterday we were tilling our fields; we did not know that the enemy was anywhere about: then bands of soldiers appeared suddenly and shot most of us before we had time to move. Then they went into our houses and killed our wives and our daughters—killed them and worse—and then they burnt our village. But why? What have we done? What has our Belgium done? Yesterday we were out in the sunshine, tilling our fields, and to-night we have nothing and we are here. But why? What has our little Belgium done? Your heart almost burst with the monotonous agony. Yet with all this you saw no tears; that is one of the

things you remember. Three years before the War, a German, speaking on behalf of the powerful Pan-German League, had written: "War must leave nothing to the vanquished except eyes to weep over their misery,"—but these Belgian peasants did not weep; they could not. I hardly ever saw a tear.

So these simple dwellers of the country-side came flooding in, silent for the most part, with a kind of heroic acceptance which you would not have had otherwise, but which hurt beyond belief. Their poor shattered human loves, their wrecked homes, were memories only; yet that was accepted too. A man who stood watching that stream of appalling human misery wrote of it afterwards: "They were unimportant people; had they all stayed in their homes to be slain there, the great world would not have missed them, would have got along quite comfortably; probably not a dozen of them had been known beyond a radius of ten miles from his native hamlet; I dare say they really didn't matter—but they were uncommonly like you and me."

According to the Prussian Creed: "The sight of suffering does one good; the infliction of suffering does one more good." It is to be regretted that the German High Command could not have witnessed that pitiful entry into Ghent of the non-combatants whom they had first dispossessed, then mutilated, and finally hunted.

I had been at the *Palais des Fêtes* three or four days only, but time seemed to be moving with lightning speed; new Wartime experiences came crowding, one on the heels of the other, and event followed event with such rapidity that it was as good as listening to a quick-firing gun. Already the first days of October were slipping away, and we were warned that the Germans were closing in on us. That race northwards of the opposing armies from the region of the Aisne, was being felt all over Belgium. Rumour constantly whispered that the enemy was actually entering the town, that Ghent must be evacuated immediately—but they had not yet come. Antwerp was still holding out, though we knew that the heavy siege guns had long since been brought up from Namur, and were pounding at the outer forts, and two of these were said to have fallen. We were told that there had been fighting at St. Nicolas, yet it was still possible to get through by car to Antwerp. (We civilians could not, of course, always distinguish between rumour and reality.) There was fighting everywhere, or so it appeared; Termonde and Alost were constantly being shelled, and news, terrible news, came sifting in of desperate hand to hand encounters in outlying villages, where the wounded still lay untended, though the Belgian Red Cross Ambulances shot to and from the firing lines with unflinching and untiring heroism, while ambulance trains, packed with wounded, brought in their sorry freight from Antwerp. The hospitals in Ghent were filled with wounded and dying—what if the Germans did come? How would the wounded be carried away to safety? Ghent began to lose some of its earlier self-assurance, the feeling that it was immune; for day by day, like the stern hand of Fate, a Taube hung overhead in the blue vault. Would the expected French and British reinforcements never come?

Then some cheering news reached us. We heard that French troops were

being concentrated at Courtrai; rumour whispered that they were in great force there, and shortly after, to our boundless joy, we awoke one day to find Ghent swarming with them. Our hopes rose, and we waited breathlessly for the promised coming of the British. They also came at last. Suddenly one evening (everything happened like a shot in those days) the streets were full of them. Those British Marines came lilting into town, serene and sunny, with "Tipperary" on their lips, and a smile in their eyes, and the people of Ghent went swiftly and utterly mad. It was positively pathetic to see the welcome that they gave "*les Anglais*". They could not believe that they had really come. It was not in the least that they loved the British better than the French, but the French were always their neighbours; they had always been at their side, and I question if many of the Belgians at this moment remembered Mons, or realized what the British had already done. It was as though they had just entered the War, and were come as new Allies to fight for the first time. So they passed on their way to Antwerp, and following in their rear—a whole galaxy of London "General" motor-buses, carrying ammunition and supplies. That was really a humorous touch to lighten the grim shadow of War. As the Marines had come singing, so the buses came lumbering—"Shepherd's Bush", "Hendon", "Kentish Town", "Holborn", —dear old home names! It was not a week since I had been living in the midst of them, but it might have been a century. The next morning as I hurried out to work, turning a corner sharply, I ran right into a Cricklewood bus, drawn comfortably up at the side of the road,—you might have expected someone to be serving "early tea" from its rear platform, so cosy and homelike did it look. I could not help stopping to give it an affectionate pat, and to wish one or two of the Tommies standing there, "God speed". So far as I can remember, I have never been in Cricklewood in my life, but that old Cricklewood bus was like a kind and steadying hand in the rush and fever of those stirring days.

I have no idea how many French or how many of the British came at this time. It is perhaps difficult to realize, with the War so far behind us, how very little those of us who were in the midst of moving armies, really knew of what was going on. It is easy now to sit in a chair and read some history of the War, and get things all neatly arranged in one's mind: but at the moment we looked at the passing show, the rapid movement of troops, more as it was related to our work, perhaps, than as fitting into the great whole, for the simple reason that few of us non-combatants on the spot had a long enough view of the situation to know much about the great whole. Besides which, we were so desperately busy just trying to keep up our small end. I cannot hope, therefore, actually to record many of the interesting things which I must have witnessed, because I saw relatively too small a portion of those great and terrible days to realize always what was important and what was not, and rather trivial things were sometimes those which impressed one most at the time, though it could also be said that as everything was almost violently interesting, everything seemed on that account to be

of the utmost importance. There was so much to see, however, that inevitably you missed a lot. While, for instance, you would be noting the difference between the marching of the Poilu and the Tommy, you would forget to note some of the regiments as they passed, and now you probably wish you had kept a sharper lookout. So, as I have said, I have no idea how many French and British I saw come into the town. It is stated, however, that in these last days, before the fall of Antwerp, there were between 25,000 and 30,000 Allied troops concentrated in Ghent, and I often wonder where we all put ourselves!

At the end of my first three or four days at the *Palais des Fêtes*, it was suggested to me that instead of working among the refugees there, I should join a kind of scouting organization, members of which were sent out into the surrounding country to pick up some of the countless refugees who, unable because of utter exhaustion to go any further, were literally in danger of dying of starvation if not from open and untended wounds. It was a small Belgian unit, and I think it was chiefly owing to the fact that I was an American that I got into it. The good Belgians looked on us with a kind of dog-like trust, counting always on the help and sympathy of our country, and as I look back on those early days of the War, I am always astonished at the things that Americans could do; the doors which suddenly opened; the facility with which we could move about. We could go almost anywhere, right into the German lines without any apparent preliminaries—I knew of several most curious cases while I was in Ghent—because, being "neutral", we were therefore Hun-proof; this meant, or was supposed to mean, arrest-proof; and it did mean this if you could establish your identity satisfactorily. It might have included bomb-proof—but of course, that was asking too much.

I joined this small organization, then, and with it scoured as much of the countryside as was left us to the east, for, as I have said, the actual firing line was often not more than four or five miles distant. This work took us into lonely and dreary places indeed; into semi-destroyed and abandoned villages which had been the scenes of sharp and terrible fighting in the interminable advance and retreat of the battle lines—sharp and terrible fighting as the bullet-spattered walls and the heaps of fallen bricks and shattered glass told us, and great gaping holes in the sides of the houses where some shell had burst; always, too, solitary and half starved cats creeping noiselessly through the ruins, adding an air of indescribable desolation. We found our abandoned refugees in all kinds of corners, wherever they could drag themselves for imaginary shelter; often in the cellars of the demolished houses where they had crawled, to die like animals, out of sight. It was a heart-breaking occupation to go down to fetch them from there, for on hearing our footsteps they usually thought at first that we were Germans, and their terror, even in their half dead condition, was a dreadful thing to see.

I remember one night with special vividness, for this was the first time that I had seen certain aspects of modern warfare save in pictures. We had been sent out very late (nearly midnight, I fancy) some distance on the

Antwerp road, beyond Lokeren, toward St. Nicolas, for some special cases in that general vicinity which had been reported to us. The password had been given us, of course,—"Marne", or "Mons", or something like that I think—so we had no trouble in getting by the sentries who were at short distances apart, and who came creeping out of the shadows to accost us, the red lanterns which they carried giving them a look of unreality, like figures on a stage, and we drove along, in a dim, sad moonlight, over the roughly paved road, through mile after mile of Belgian troops camped on either side of the road; past acres of barbed wire entanglements, or wide stretches of ground thickly staked—those cruel, sharp stakes which have made so many people think of them as the sowing of dragon's teeth—pale, ash-coloured sand bags piled high and in long, thin lines which stretched away into the darkness, looking like chalky dikes running out into a gloomy winter sea; sombre and indistinct masses of cavalry, the horses tied close together, curiously tranquil, as though dreaming in the moonlight; silent men stealing phantomlike here and there; the occasional, distant bark of some restless "police dog"; and hundreds of dying campfires, throwing up their strangely-shifting, swift-moving shadows, as if the dead had come back to life to strike just one last blow; and off to the south the glare of burning villages. That night scene is indelibly engraved on my memory, and perhaps I felt a premonition of the change that was to come over it before many hours had passed.

Then came the terrible day that we spent at Melle, a village less than five miles away on the Alost road which runs southeast out of Ghent. Melle had not been evacuated, and the Germans, entrenched just beyond the end of the town, and trying (I believe for the third or fourth time) to seize it, were being repulsed with great loss on both sides. The French were playing their usual gallant part by the side of the Belgians that day, and the street fighting—that deadliest of all kinds, because of the close quarters and the intolerable, echoing din caused by the narrow streets and the crash of falling walls—the street fighting was of the severest. Our small unit was not, of course, mixed up in this, because unfortunately that was not our rôle; we were organized for civilian relief; but as we came into the town, in response to the call we had received, and in search of those we had come to help, the fight was still going on, though now at the far end. We were told to keep as close as possible to the houses, however, avoiding the middle of the street, and so diminishing the risk of being struck by bullet or shrapnel. The noise was terrific, for, beside the tangled street fighting below, shells were shrieking overhead, though none were actually bursting in the town itself. The reason for this (so we were told afterwards) was that the German lines being on one side of the village and those of the French and Belgians on the other, each side was trying to prevent the bringing up of reinforcements; they were carefully avoiding the village itself for fear of hitting their own men. We had come at an exciting, even if at a last moment, for as we crept along in the shelter of the houses, a company of French Marines rushed suddenly out from a side street,

and, the order given, they dashed forward down the main thoroughfare in the direction of the fighting. Then without warning, and like a whirlwind (from heaven knows where—everything was happening with bewildering rapidity) there shot past us two or three of the famous Belgian *mitrailleuses-à-chien* batteries, the dogs straining valiantly at their collars, more eager than anyone to get their small guns into action. That really was a wonderful sight (in miniature, as it were), for so small are the gun carriages that one forgets what deadly work those little batteries can do. We soon heard them giving a good account of themselves, though just how or where I never knew—that fight was more noise to me than anything else; I saw little of it, for we had come too late. It was evident that the Germans were being pushed back (they came on again later, I believe, and with more success), and the sound of the fighting gradually subsided. As we advanced we saw how desperate and how determined the assault and the defence had been a little while before we had arrived. The straight main street, at some period of the fight, had been raked by *mitrailleuses* from a part of the German lines not two hundred yards beyond the village limit, and it was a place of horror; the dead piled high, in ghastly, inanimate heaps, just as they had fallen—hundreds together. There was no time to bury them for days, I was told afterwards. Though Red Cross Ambulances were there, many of the wounded had not yet been carried away, but lay half propped against the walls, or stretched out on the hard paving stones. Some of the fields around the village were also filled with dead and dying and sorely wounded—there, where the shells had been falling—and there were some Belgian Red Cross Volunteer women, belonging to an Ambulance Corps, whom I shall never forget. They did the most splendid work that day. Without previous experience of warfare, they went straight across those fields, the enemy guns trained on them because they could not of course keep out of sight, bringing in the wounded on stretchers too heavy for them, or tending the dying as they lay in their last agony; never pausing for rest or food; careless of themselves; mindful only of the suffering of those who had fought so bravely and who now needed their care. It was at Melle, too, that I first came to realize what the priests of Belgium did on the battle-fields. They were everywhere, and they were heroic; true soldiers of Christ. They went where only the hardiest veterans were to be found; into the trenches, under the most murderous shell fire, exhorting the men there to remember God and to fight to the death for King and country; they were to be seen in burning villages, pulling the helpless out of charred ruins; on open battle fields, exposed to bursting shells and ceaseless rifle fire; and when there seemed to be nothing else to do which was more strictly within the supposed limits of their priestly vocation, they seized a rifle themselves from the hand of some dead trench-comrade, and fired at the enemy with hearty and vigorous abandon. The soldiers adored them, and no wonder. They were their staunchest friends. So this day at Melle I had an opportunity to see for myself what the Belgian priests were like, for there were two Curés—I do not now remember where they came from, but one belonged to Melle itself, I believe—who,

according to the village folk, had been working without pause for three or four days and nights; who were always to be found where the fighting was the hottest, showing a supreme contempt for death; who picked up the wounded when bullets were flying and shrapnel was splintering all about them, bearing them away on stretchers or in their arms if need were; who, kneeling beside the dying, in the open field and in full sight of the enemy, their cassocks soaked with blood gushing from the open wounds of those they were succouring, administered the last rites, without haste, in an immense and tender compassion. Such were the priests of Belgium. Nothing could daunt them; torture itself could not silence them; from first to last they showed the true Belgian spirit in all they did.

As soon as we were able to get there, we went to the Convent of Melle where we had been told there were wounded non-combatants needing help, for although for the most part they had kept to their cellars during the terrifying hours of the street fighting, some had been forced into the open by falling roofs or gaping walls, and so had been caught by bullet or bayonet thrust. The sisters were of course overwhelmed with work, but there was a curious peace reigning in the convent. As we entered it, out of the dead-filled street where hell had been let loose, we passed as one would pass from the tumult of a boiling cataract to the still, untroubled waters at the river's edge. There was almost a twilight stillness, for the cool, white walls, and the silent ministrations of the nuns, gave a feeling of rest and calm despite the misery which greeted us. It was a pathetic scene. Lying about, in all kinds of positions indicating mental as well as physical pain, were some of the simple people of Melle, also some refugees from distant villages who had been caught here in their flight to Ghent, and the good sisters were moving noiselessly among them, speaking little save to offer some gentle encouragement, while giving them really skilful medical attention; compassionately practical, and with a sweet and gracious wisdom. They knew their poor townsfolk well. The War annihilated many beautiful things, but I doubt if the peace of that little convent at Melle could suffer death. To me, that day, as I passed through its humble door, from the hideous blood-soaked streets, it was as though something out of the Eternal had touched me, and later, when we left with the few refugees we had come for, I knew that I was carrying away with me a memory which would never grow dim.

In my own mind I always think of that day at Melle as ending the first phase of "the race to the sea", for, immediately after, Antwerp fell, and that was the signal for the second phase. The stubborn fighting at Melle is now a matter of recorded history; the village was, on the day of which I have written, in the very midst of the danger zone, and it was one of the last of the towns to hold out against the German rush toward Ghent.

VOLUNTEER.

(To be continued)

THE CAVE OF THE NYMPHS

By what stars shall we direct our flight and by what means avoid the magic power of Circe and the detaining charms of Calypso? For thus the fable of Ulysses obscurely signifies, which feigns him abiding an unwilling exile, though alluring spectacles were continually presented to his sight, and his stay was invited by everything that could delight the senses and enchant the heart. But our true country, like that of Ulysses, is that from whence we come and where our Father lives.

PLOTINUS.

IT has been said that Theosophy is the revelation that there is a purpose of life. That purpose has been represented as the discovery by each human being of the real and enduring Self which is both the cause and the objective of his personal existence.

By virtue of its divine ancestry, the soul inherits the right to know the Real, but it must earn the privilege of exercising its right. Thus, the moment of the discovery of the Real has been likened to the culminating adventure of a romance. Before the Real can be known, the aspirant must be fired with the desire to know it, and he must learn to stand firm in the conviction that, in spite of every lying appearance, knowledge exists and is attainable.

The ordinary language of metaphysical demonstration cannot do justice to this theme, for the reason that its subject-matter overflows the limits of the intellect as at present constituted. Therefore, the sages and philosophers who have described the quest of the Real, have been forced to illustrate their exposition with parables and allegories symbolizing the experience of the heart.

The quotation from Plotinus is an example. The philosopher is trying to make his audience realize that the longing of the soul for the world of divine beauty is not an abstract mental condition, but an intense and moving state of consciousness. After exhausting the resources of his powerful intellect to illumine his meaning, he calls in the aid of a poet. He compares the nostalgia of the soul, exiled in the body, to the homesickness of Ulysses. It is the parable of the Prodigal Son.

The *Odyssey* has been read by many as a mere tale of earthly adventure with no other significance than that which is obvious upon the surface of the poem. The wisest of the Greeks, however, did not regard it in this way. For them, Homer was more than a great poet; he was a seer, a mystic. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were cherished as mystical scriptures, as treatises revealing through the veil of romance and allegory the sacred destiny of the soul and the process of initiation into the Mysteries. Especially during the late afternoon of the Greek day, during the Platonic Renaissance which extended from Ammonius Saccas to Proclus, the best minds of the disappearing race

seem to have turned back to meditate upon the glorious dawn of its cycle. The greatest of the commentators upon Homer were the later Neoplatonists.

In the view of the Neoplatonists, Ulysses was the type of the human soul adrift upon the waters of illusion, but saved from annihilation again and again by the ministrations of Pallas Athene (Divine Wisdom), the initiated Guide who responded in compassion to the prayers of the homesick wanderer. Whether we accept or reject their claim to have discovered an underlying mysticism in Homer, we shall be forced to admit that there are passages in his poems which are senseless if interpreted in any other way. And there are other passages which recall portions of the *Divine Comedy*, such as, for instance, the episode when Pallas Athene, like another Beatrice, unseals the inner sight of Ulysses after his return to his native island of Ithaca. Without the aid of the Goddess, he could not see the true outlines of the dear country which he had reached at last.

In the same Thirteenth Book where this scene is enacted, there is a description of a hill above the little harbour where Ulysses had landed, and of a mysterious cave which passes through the hill. It seems that this cave caused much wonderment among the ancient readers of Homer. The discussions which revolved about it suggest, incidentally, that matter-of-fact people existed in antiquity, just as they exist in modern times. There were those who argued that there was such a cave on the island of Ithaca, and there were those who argued that the cave was only a fiction of the poet.

Fortunately we possess a treatise by the Neoplatonist, Porphyry, in which the philosopher considers what may have been Homer's purpose in introducing the description of the cavern at this particular point in his narrative. Porphyry comes to the happy conclusion that it is quite irrelevant whether the cave was or was not a feature of the Ithacan landscape, for the grotto depicted by Homer is the cave of initiation. He believes that Homer, speaking to those who had ears to hear, intended to convey the idea that Ulysses, landing on his island, had completed, as it were, a cycle of mystical experience, and had thus gained a definite status in the spiritual world.

A work must be judged by its merits, but it is certain that Porphyry did not come wholly unqualified to his task. He was the most distinguished disciple of Plotinus and, after his master's death (270 A.D.), was the leading exponent of the Neoplatonic doctrine. Though much of his time was devoted to the paraphrasing and editing of the works of Plotinus, he holds independent rank as one of the great figures of the Platonic Renaissance. Madame Blavatsky refers to him as "the most practically philosophical, and the soberest, of all the Neoplatonists" (*Theosophical Glossary*, 239–240). In 1823, Thomas Taylor translated *The Cave of the Nymphs*, and his version with its valuable foot-notes, has been followed by the present writer, who has, however, taken the liberty occasionally of paraphrasing Taylor's phrases when their wording has seemed too technical.

The following are the verses from the Thirteenth Book of the Odyssey which serve as Porphyry's text.

"High at the head a branching olive grows,
And crowns the pointed cliffs with shady boughs.
A cavern pleasant, though involved in night,
Beneath it lies, the Naiades' delight:
Where bowls and urns of workmanship divine
And massy beams in native marble shine;
On which the Nymphs amazing webs display,
Of purple hue, and exquisite array.
The busy bees within the urns secure
Honey delicious and, like nectar, pure.
Perpetual waters through the grotto glide.
A lofty gate unfolds on either side;
That to the north is pervious to mankind;
The sacred south to immortals is consigned."

The cave, says Porphyry, is the symbol of the material universe and of the human body which is the microcosm of that universe. "The exterior of a cavern is pleasant, but its interior is obscure and its very bottom is darkness itself." Similarly, physical Nature may be conceived as a cavernous island in a boundless space filled with the light of an undivided, divine consciousness. Embodied existence, being separated by the walls of illusion from the direct radiance of the Central Sun, is qualified by limitation and darkness. It is narrow and obscure, like a cave.

It is scarcely necessary to prove this point. The body has the appearance of being a thing quite complete in itself, so that the consciousness identified with it, suffers the delusion of being distinct from all other consciousness, embodied or disembodied. As this incarnated "self" is limited in space, so is it limited in time, for the physical basis of its existence is in itself only a transient aggregate of molecules which has no being beyond the confines of birth and death.

Embodied consciousness is dark, since only an infinitesimal portion of the light of the Real filters through the barrier of the body. This is true, in the most concrete and physical sense. The eye is sensitive to one gamut of rays and blind to the rest. The other senses respond to various gamuts of vibrations, but each is operative in a zone which has the dimension of a point in relation to the unlimited sphere of being which surrounds it.

It would seem that there are three possible attitudes to take towards bodily existence. There is the irrationally hopeful acceptance of its limitations and darkness, which is the attitude of the vast majority of mankind. This rests upon the continued resurgence of the psychic desire for sensation, coupled with the notion that the body is designed to be an instrument for the gratification of psychic impulses. Then, as opposed to this general view of the body, there is the opposite extreme of that false asceticism which loathes and scorns and abuses the sum-total of physical nature. This false asceticism is, in a way, symbolized by Simon Stylites sitting motionless on his pillar, and

seems to have taken deepest root in the East. Its votaries have, indeed, freed themselves, to an extraordinary degree, from the vulgar craving for sensation, and from the illusion that incarnation is desirable as an end in itself; but they have not imagined that incarnation may still have its function in the economy of Nature.

Porphyry suggests a third attitude toward the body, conceiving it to be the matrix from which the real self-consciousness of the soul is born. In the words of an Indian sage, "Maya is the Shakti of Atman." The dark and narrow cave of the human body becomes, then, a place of probation for the Ego which has voluntarily submitted to limitation and darkness for the purposes of its own evolution. "The ancient Persians occultly signifying the descent of the soul into sublunary regions and its subsequent reascent, initiated the mystic in a cavern."

From this point of view, the body becomes a prison only when the soul lingers within it longer than is necessary for its instruction. In truth, it is a corridor through which the soul passes from a lower to a higher stage of being. The Mohammedans have preserved a saying of Jesus: "Life is a bridge. Pass over it. Do not build upon it."

"Perpetual waters through the grotto glide." Porphyry comments: "In consequence of containing perpetually flowing streams of water, this cave is not a symbol of a spiritual substance but of a material essence." It is the quality of sensuous, animal life which is suggested by the image.

Heraclitus, speaking of disembodied souls, says that "we live their death and we die their life," as if the animal life of the "separate" self in the body appeared to the spiritual man as a chilling contraction of the partless consciousness of the Logos in which he participates. Certain properties of water aptly symbolize the night which darkens the soul's vision as it descends into generation and which compels the soul, as it were, to evolve specialized organs of sensation in order to feel its way in the dark, as a blind man develops and enhances the sense of touch. Thus, to mention two phases only of the animal consciousness in which the soul's powers are condensed, it is aware of things outside the body to the extent that their superficial aspects are reflected on its own surface, as a stream mirrors more or less clearly the trees and rocks on the banks; and it is in a state of continuous change, like a river with many currents and eddies.

The animal consciousness may be compared to a mirror enclosed in a set of lenses which absorb or deflect most of the rays directed towards it, so that the images which it receives are fragmentary and inadequate representations of things-in-themselves. However, in the animal kingdom, this apparent warping of consciousness seems to be normal, and to be designed by Nature as a means of compelling the animal to develop the germ of mind. In other words, if the instinct of an animal were virtually omniscient, if its consciousness were a perfect mirror of everything in its physical environment, it might escape suffering and prolong its life quite indefinitely, but there would be no incentive for it to become actively intelligent, for intelligence would only

spoil its perfection. The animal is also forced by the struggle for existence to distinguish between the image of its own body and the images of other bodies, and this isolation and magnification of one image, at the expense of all the rest, would seem to foreshadow the rudimentary state of psychic self-consciousness, when the image of the body is regarded as a separate self.

The animal consciousness is again marked by an endless series of displacements. William James often compared the continuous succession and transformation of our ordinary moods and desires to a stream. There results from this condition a state of unremitting hunger and dissatisfaction. The desires of the animal nature cannot be completely and permanently satisfied, for each separate desire transmits part of its content of force to a new desire which succeeds it, while another portion of its force is mysteriously stored away as a *skandha* or seed of some future counterpart of itself. It has been suggested that the stinging power of appetite is the great agent of evolution in the animal kingdom. Without its incessant stimulus, for example, the animals would never have gained and retained the faculty of locomotion.

The "moisture" of animal life, therefore, seems to provide a necessary medium for the subsequent development of two of the great "principles" which the soul can only acquire, as it appears, by reflecting itself in the bodily consciousness. These "principles" may be defined as *individualized* mind and desire. As Heraclitus said, "Souls like to get wet."

Porphyry's comment is, perhaps, less cryptic than it sounds: "The ancients thought that (living) souls are incumbent upon water which is inspired by divinity, as Numenius says, who adds . . . that the Spirit of God moves on the waters. The Egyptians, likewise, represent the Sun and all the Planets, not standing on anything solid, but on a sailing vessel; for souls descending into generation fly to moisture."

"The cave is sacred to Nymphs," he continues, "not to Nymphs in general but to a particular order, the Naiads. We give the special title of Naiads to the nature-powers that preside over waters; and this term is also commonly applied to all souls descending into generation."

The Naiads are the Reincarnating Egos of the Eastern Wisdom. Retaining their inalienable identity as an angelic host, they are, nevertheless, mysteriously immersed in the waters of animal life. Out of the substance of the water they weave vestures, "purple webs admirable to the view." "To souls descending into generation, what symbols can be more appropriate than the instruments pertaining to weaving? . . . The purple webs are evidently the flesh which is woven from the blood. Thus also Persephone, the guardian of everything produced from seed, is described by Orpheus as weaving a web; and the Heavens were called by the ancients a veil, in consequence of being, as it were, the vestment of the celestial Gods." Furthermore, the webs of the Nymphs are suspended from beams of marble, "as the formation of the flesh is on and around the bones, which in the bodies of animals resemble stones." It is interesting to recall, in reference to the last sentence, certain

passages in Volume II of *The Secret Doctrine*, where it is suggested that the appearance of thinking man on this planet is correlated with the development of the skeleton.

The purple web symbolizes the blending of spiritual and physical natures. The personality or psychic self, born of this fusion, was described as a composite entity (*suntheton*) by the Neoplatonists. In the image of the web the design seems to stand for the spiritual or noetic element which comes from above, the purple dye signifying the fluid life of animal sensations over which the noetic element moves, like the Spirit of God, while the substance of the web is differentiated matter.

According to a beautiful interpretation, the Nymphs finish on Earth the weaving which they began in Heaven. There is this passage from the Commentary of Proclus on the *Timæus* of Plato: "Orpheus says that Persephone, while she remained on high, weaving the heavenly world, was only a Nymph, as yet undefiled; but that, proceeding from her proper habitation, she left her web unfinished and was ravished by Pluto, the power of the lower world. The unfinished state of her web indicates that the Universe would be imperfect or incomplete if nothing inferior to the celestial Gods were produced. Hence Plato says that the one Demiurgus calls on the many Demiurgi to weave together the immortal and mortal natures; thus reminding us that the addition of the mortal genera is the perfection of the textorial life of the Universe."

We now come to the most suggestive part of Porphyry's treatise. There are "bowls and urns of workmanship divine" within the cave, and "the busy bees within the urns secure honey delicious, and like nectar pure."

Two meanings are latent in these verses. The first is the superficial. Earthly honey is a symbol of the sweet intoxications of sensation, as the bees represent the restless desires of the psychic self which collect drops of pleasure from objects of sensation. "According to Orpheus, Saturn was ensnared with honey by Jupiter. For Saturn, being filled with honey, was intoxicated, his senses were darkened, and he slept."

However, Porphyry stresses another and more significant meaning. The powers of the mortal man are identical in essence with the powers of the immortal, and the mortal can be transformed into the immortal through the purification and re-direction of the faculties which he now corrupts and misuses.

"The stony bowls in the grotto are, indeed, the symbols of Bacchus, since they are bodies of earth that have been submitted to fire; and these are cognate to the vine, the gift of the God, since the fruit of the vine is brought to a proper maturity by the celestial fire of the Sun." The honey which is deposited in these bowls is, according to the philosopher, not the pleasure of the senses. It is the nutriment of the soul which is gathered from the hearts of flowers, that is, from the essence of things experienced. When this nectar is poured into "the bowls of workmanship divine," they are purified and filled with a divine energy. In St. Paul's words, "This corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality."

It is clear that, with the introduction of these new symbols, we have come to the turning-point in the cave, where the path of the immortals diverges upwards from the path of the mortals. That turning-point corresponds to the moment when the soul awakens in the body and becomes aware of the cavern walls which hem it in, at the same time that it remembers with passionate nostalgia its own bright home in the heavens. Hitherto it has passively submitted to the delusion that the body is its self, and that the body's desires are its desires. Now it sees that delusion as grotesque and monstrous, for it recognizes that its real Self overflows the boundaries of the body and that its real desires cannot be satisfied by any sensation of the body.

In the *Odyssey*, this moment of repentance or "turning back" occurs when Ulysses deprives the Cyclops of sight. "This deed became the occasion of reminding him of his errors, until he was safely landed in his own country. For one is not automatically liberated from this life by the simple act of blinding the Cyclops (who is the "natal demon" of the lower nature) and of paralyzing its energies. He who dares to do this, as Ulysses dared, will be pursued by the anger of the marine and material 'Gods', whom it is first requisite to appease by sacrifices, labours, and patient endurance, at one time, indeed, contending with the passions, and at another, employing enchantments, and by these various means transforming himself ever more completely, in order that, being at length divested of the torn garments, by which his true person has been concealed, he may recover the ruined empire of his soul."

Thus Porphyry describes the war in which the soul engages from the instant when it sees and seriously begins to combat the errors which its psychic personality has committed in its name. It is a battle to the death, for the vanquished loses independent existence and is transformed into the substance of the victor. Thus the triumphant soul can return home, enriched by the powers of self-consciousness which it brings back from its adventures in the lower world, and which it could not conceivably have acquired if it had not gone forth and staked all upon the issue.

The vision of its errors and the desire to return home are the two great factors which move the soul to begin the ascent towards the outlet of the cave of initiation. From this point of view, one can scarcely fail to be moved by the great beauty of the Homeric imagery, as the Neoplatonists have interpreted it.

The nectar which is the essence of things, is the beverage of the Gods. Thomas Taylor, quoting from the *Scholia* of Hermias on the *Phædrus* of Plato, brings out the inner meaning of these lines from the Fourth Book of the *Iliad*, describing an Olympian banquet.

> "Now with each other, on the golden floor,
> Seated near Zeus, the Gods converse; to whom
> The venerable Hebe nectar bears,
> In golden goblets; and as these flow round,
> The immortals turn their careful eyes on Troy."

Hermias says that ambrosia, the food of the Gods, is analogous to dry nutriment, and signifies their spiritual and incorruptible natures, whereas nectar is analogous to moist nutriment and indicates their providential attention to mortal natures. "When the Gods are represented as energizing providentially, they are said to drink nectar."

The pleasures of the Immortals "must belong to the pure soul only and be possessed therefore by all pure souls equally, and thus be the especial property of the whole only when united." The Gods long to share the elixir of life with the children of earth, and so they instil a drop of it in the heart of every terrestrial flower, where it is duly found by the soul which goes forth in quest of it.

One can now perceive a new significance in the image of the bees. "All souls proceeding into generation are not simply called bees, but those who will live in it justly and who, after having performed such things as are acceptable to the Gods, will again return to their kindred Stars. For the bee loves to return to the place from whence it first came, and is eminently just and sober. . . . We must, therefore, admit that honeycombs and bees are appropriate symbols of a spiritual nature, which is wedded to the nature produced by generation." It would seem that an Eastern scripture, the *Prashna Upanishad*, completes the thought of the passage from Porphyry: "Like as the bees all follow the honeymakers' king when he departs, and all return when he returns, so did voice, mind, sight and hearing."

The symbolism of the two gates of the cave is rather involved, being cast in the technical language of astrology; so that it is impossible here to attempt more than to produce a cursory sketch of Porphyry's commentary. It may be suggested, however, that the two portals are adapted to the needs of two classes of beings, of those who are forced by their own needs and desires to reincarnate time after time in the cave of the body, and of those who enter the cave only for the salvation of others. Such a distinction between earth-bound and liberated souls, is frequently set forth in the scriptures of India. Thomas Taylor, in his remarkable essay on *The Wanderings of Ulysses*, suggests that Ulysses himself "was by no means such an exalted hero as Hercules, or Pythagoras, or Plato, or Socrates; for they largely benefited others, but he only benefited himself. For all his companions perished prior to his arrival at Ithaca." Therefore, Ulysses may be taken as the type of those souls who descend through the portal of the mortals, but who do not reascend by the way they have come, because they discover during physical life the way of the immortals. While yet alive he is endowed with the consciousness of immortality.

There is another aspect of the symbol. Its astronomical correspondences illustrate the cosmic implications of the soul's evolution. The progression of the soul towards self-consciousness is an expression of a universal law equally active in the formation of atoms and solar systems.

"It has been asserted", says Porphyry, "that the two portals of the cave are the Zodiacal Signs of Cancer and Capricornus; that Cancer is the gate through which souls descend and Capricornus that through which they ascend."

It is necessary to recall that Cancer is the sign of the summer solstice, after which begin the shortening of the days and the retreat of the year towards the darkness of winter. Capricornus, the sign of the winter solstice, marks the re-birth of the year and the promise of the return of the solar warmth and light. Incidentally, the traditional date of the birth of Christ practically coincides with the period when the Sun enters the sign of Capricornus.

The universality of the old Mystery language is indicated by these lines from the *Prashna Upanishad*, which seem to express in some detail the ideas intended by Homer.

"The circling year, verily, is a Lord of beings. Of it there are two courses, the southern and the northern. Therefore they who worship, saying, Offerings and rewards are our work! win for themselves the lunar world. They, verily, return again. Therefore those seers who desire offspring follow the southern path. Matter, verily, is this path of the Fathers.

"And so by the northern, by fervour, by service of the Eternal, by faith, by wisdom seeking the Divine Self, they win the sun. This is the home of lives, this is the immortal, the fearless, this is the higher way; from this, they return not again. This is the resting place."

Thus, according to one interpretation of the Homeric image, the souls who pass through the northern gate towards the south descend into exile, into limitation and darkness. The souls which emerge through the southern gate "ascend through the Sun to the Gods" along the path of the immortals. "Let it be noted that the poet does not say that this is the avenue of the Gods. It is, indeed, the way of the immortals, this being the appellation of our souls which are *per se* or essentially immortal."

"One particular remains to be explained, and that is the olive planted at the top of the cavern. . . . The growth of the olive in such a situation is not fortuitous, as might be suspected, for it illumines the mystery of the cave. Since the world was not produced rashly and casually but is the work of divine wisdom and a spiritual nature, it is proper that an olive tree, the symbol of this wisdom, should flourish near the cavern which is an image of the world. For the olive is the plant of Athene, and Athene is wisdom." As the olive symbolizes wisdom, so also it signifies inner security and peace, the reward of spiritual effort, the crown of life. The initiate who has emerged from the purgatory of the cave receives as a token of immortality a wreath of the olive's ever-flourishing leaves.

"In this cave, therefore," says Homer, "all external possessions must have been left. And now, assuming a suppliant's habit, subjecting the bodily powers, casting aside everything superfluous, indifferent to the energies of the senses, the initiate sits at the foot of the olive and consults with Wisdom by what means he may complete the destruction of the hostile rout of passions which still lurk in the secret recesses of his nature." Ulysses was in his native land, but not yet in his home, when he conversed with his divine Companion. A dangerous adventure lay before him, for he had to destroy the Suitors, the enemies of his inner household.

Porphyry concludes: "Indeed, as it appears to me, it was not without reason that Numenius and his followers thought the person of Ulysses in the *Odyssey* represented Man, who passes over the dark and stormy sea of matter and generation, and thus at length arrives at that region where tempests and seas are unknown and where dwells a nation,

"'Who ne'er knew salt, or heard the billows roar.'"

STANLEY V. LADOW.

If the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would appear to man as it is, infinite. For man has closed himself up, till he sees all things through the narrow chinks of his cavern.—BLAKE.

THE HAKO: AN INDIAN RITE

PART II

THE cycle of rituals which constitute the Hako Ceremony takes five days for completion, and follows immediately upon The Preparatory Rites which were described in the preceding instalment of this article. As stated therein, a commodious earth lodge with a long passage-way leading to the outer entrance, which must of necessity face the East, has been prepared and dedicated for the enactment; in the centre is the hearth, back of which, to the West, is the Consecrated Holy Place where the Sacred Articles now lie at Ceremonial rest in readiness for the approaching drama. Back of them sits the Father, flanked by the bearers of the Calumets and the Eagle Wings, while the Son occupies the "place of humility" at the north of the entrance-way. Other members of the Father's party are ranged along the south wall, and as the Children assemble they form an opposite line on the north.

When all are gathered within the Lodge, the Fathers rise, lifting the Sacred Articles, and the Kurahus addresses the Children, telling them that they must help him by reverent conduct as he tries to perform faithfully the rites handed down from their fathers; he further explains:

"It is the duty of the Kurahus to teach these things; he has received them from an older Kurahus, who has received them from a still older Kurahus, and so on through many generations back to the time when they were revealed to our fathers through a vision from the mysterious Powers Above; the vision and its promise came from the East; they always descend from The Above by that path. None of the songs of this ceremony can be changed; they must be sung accurately just as they have been handed down to us, for the words speak of the Powers Above and their gifts to us, and we must be careful of such words.

"A Kurahus must devote his life to learning these songs and their meaning and the acts which accompany them; he must spend much of his time in thinking of these things and in praying to the Mighty Powers. We have been told that in a vision our fathers were taught how to make the Feathered Calumets, how to use them, how to sway them to the songs so that they should move like the wings of a bird in flight. It was in a vision that our fathers were told how they could cause a man who was not their bodily offspring to become a Son, bound to them by a tie as strong as the natural tie between father and son. For this knowledge we give thanks.

"The Fathers have prepared for the Children a sacred feast of corn as a symbol of the loving care of a parent for his child; but before it can be tasted the thoughts of all must be lifted to Tirawa-atius; so we carry the Hako about the Lodge, waving the Feathered Stems over the heads of the people and sing-

ing that Tirawa is indeed the Father of all things here below and of the Lesser Powers which come to us in dreams. He sends help by these Lesser Powers because they alone can come to us so that we can see and feel them. And then we sing of Mother Corn, who has led us on our journey, who has entered before us the Lodge of the Son, and who brings promises of peace and plenty. When the song is over, the Children are given the feast which we have in readiness, and then they go to their homes to remain until evening.

"When the sun has set and it is dark and the stars are shining, then again all gather in the Lodge; wood is piled on the fire, and when the flames leap high the Kurahus and his party, bearing the Hako, rise from their position behind the Holy Place of the hearth. Although the Lodge in general is typified as a nest, the Holy Place at the west, back of the fire, is its special representative, and there when not in action the Hako is always laid at Ceremonial rest.

"Slowly we make the circuit of the Lodge singing the invocation to the Visions, which begins with the words:

'Hither come we pray you, come unto us
Bringing with you joy';

the spirits of the birds on the Feathered Stems join our spirits in this call, and high in their dwelling-place above, the Visions hear this call, joined to the call of our spirit, and descending by the Eastern Path, they pass over the quiet Earth. The song tells that they approach the door of the Lodge, that they cross the threshold, that they fill the Lodge with their Presence and that they

'Touch the children, gently touch them
Giving dreams of joy'—

concluding with the words,

'They the sky ascending reach their dwelling;
There they rest above,
They their dwelling reach—holy Visions,
There they rest above.' "

During the last stanza of this ritual, as the Kurahus and his assistants with the choir and the drum-bearers march around the Lodge, the song is taken up by all the people, men, women and children, until the walls fairly vibrate with the sonorous melody. Miss Fletcher tells us that the face of her old friend was radiant with joy as he described and dwelt upon the happiness brought to all by the Visions which attend the Hako.

It is now past midnight, and at the close of the great chorus the people go to their homes to sleep and dream of their happiness. The Son remains at his post near the inner door, while the Kurahus and his assistants keep watch from behind the Holy Place where the Sacred Articles again lie at Ceremonial

rest. The fire burns to embers, the noise of the camp dies slowly away, and darkness and silence settle down within the Lodge.

As the night at length draws to a close, a server is ordered to lift the skins which hang at the inner and outer doors of the long entrance-way, and to watch for and report the first glimmer of light. "When he comes in with these tidings, we rise, take up the Hako, and, looking toward the East, we sing the first song of the Dawn ceremony. We sing slowly and with reverent feeling, for we speak of the mysterious and powerful act of Tirawa in the birth of Dawn.

"In the first verse we call to Mother Earth, the Mother-who-breathes-forth-life, who has been asleep and resting during the night; the life which she breathes forth she receives with the breath of the Dawn from Tirawa:

'Awake oh Mother from sleep!
Awake, the night is far spent!
The signs of Dawn are now seen
In the East whence cometh new life';

Mother Earth hears the call, she awakes, she arises, she feels the breath of Dawn; the leaves and the grasses stir, all things move with the breath of the new day. Everywhere life is renewed.

"This is very mysterious; we are speaking of something very sacred, although it happens every day.

"Next we call upon the Mother Eagle to awake. She represents the Powers which dwell above, and which are sent by Tirawa to bring us help; she soars there where these Powers dwell, and she can speak with them; with her all the Lesser Powers awake and stir, and all things below awake and stir, for the breath of the Dawn is upon them; the breath of New Life which has come with the first signs in the East, is everywhere.

"Now Mother Eagle, messenger of the Powers Above, stands within the Lodge and the Kurahus hears her voice as she tells him what the signs in the East mean. She tells him that Tirawa, the All-Father, moves on Darkness and causes her to bring forth the Dawn. It is the breath of new-born Dawn, child of Night and Tirawa, which is felt by all the Powers, all things above and all things below, giving life for the coming Day.

"In song the Kurahus answers and tells Mother Eagle that he understands the words she spoke to him while standing there in the Lodge; that now he knows the meaning of the signs in the East,—that Night is in truth the Mother of Day, and that it is by the Power of Tirawa moving on Darkness that she gives birth to the Dawn, his child. The Child comes to awaken Man, to awaken Mother Earth and all living things that they may receive the breath of New Life for the coming day.

"This is the meaning of these songs; the words do not tell all that a song means; the meaning has been handed down from our fathers and taught to the Kurahus, who may teach it to any one who is serious-minded and truly

desires to learn these sacred things, which were first taught to our fathers by Kawa, the Mother Eagle.

"Last of all we summon the Son, who has been asleep and resting in the Lodge. He hears the call and he too looks to the East and sees the signs of Dawn.

"Now all the Powers above and all things below have risen and received the breath of New Life; Mother Eagle has stood and spoken in the Lodge, the Kurahus has heard and understood, and the Son too is awake and standing with us, awaiting the coming of the Morning Star. Morning Star is one of the Lesser Powers. Our fathers performed sacred ceremonies in his honour, and we are reverent toward him.

"Morning Star is like a man. He is painted red all over, for that is the colour of life; he is clad in leggings, and a robe is wrapped about him, and on his head is a soft, downy feather; this feather represents the soft, light cloud that is high in the heavens, and the red is the touch of the coming Sun. It is also a symbol of breath and of life.

"The Star comes from a great distance, too far away for us to know the place where he starts. At first we can hardly see him, he is so far off; then we see him again for he is coming steadily toward us all the time; we watch him approach; he comes nearer and nearer, and now we see him clearly, standing there in the heavens, a strong man shining brighter and brighter. The soft plume in his hair moves with the breath of the New Day, and the ray of the Sun touches it with colour; as he stands there so bright he is bringing us strength and new life.

"Then as we look he grows less bright, he is receding, going back to the dwelling-place whence he came; we watch him vanishing, passing out of sight. He has left with us the gift of life which Tirawa sends him to bestow.

"Still we stand looking eastward through the long passage-way, watching and singing till we see the Dawn itself approach. Nearer and nearer it comes, its brightness fills the sky, the shadowy forms on Earth become visible and more visible, and then the Dawn also slowly recedes; it is following the Morning Star, back to the place whence it came—to its birthplace.

"The Day is close behind, advancing along the path of the Morning Star and the Dawn; as he approaches, the Dawn vanishes wholly from our sight, and we sing:

'Day is here! Day is here, is here!
Arise my Son, lift thine eyes!
Day is here! Day is here, is here!
Look up my Son and see the Day!
Day is here! Day is here, is here!
Day is here, is here!'

"We sing this song with loud voices; we are glad. We shout 'Daylight has come! Day is here,' for the light is over the Earth. As we look out through

the door of the Lodge we can see the trees, and all things stand out clearly in the light. Still we sing and shout, 'Day is here! Daylight has come!' We call to the children to awake, that all the animals are coming forth from the places where they have been sleeping. The deer leads them, she comes from her covert bringing her young into the light of day, and our hearts are glad as we sing:

'Lo, the deer! Lo the deer, the deer
Comes from her covert of the night!
Day is here! Day is here, is here!
Lo, the deer! Lo the deer, the deer!
All creatures wake and see the light.
Day is here! Day is here, is here!' "

Miss Fletcher comments,—"Such is the drama of the Dawn, the mystic birth of Day as conceived by a Pawnee fully versed in the beliefs of his people. The aged Kurahus has given us a glimpse of its imagery and meaning from the very centre of the magic circle, when otherwise we should have to content ourselves with the superficial view of an outsider. As he shows it to us, the simplicity, beauty, and reverent feeling, cannot fail to appeal to everyone who has watched the silent majesty of a breaking day, whether on the sea or the hills or the widespread prairies."

This pæan of praise ushers in the second day of the ceremony, the day devoted to celebrating the masculine qualities of virility and strength, typified by the Sun-Father. There is a charming personification of his Messenger as the Bright Ray which alights like a bird on the Lodge, then enters it from above and moves about within, touching for a moment the centre of life, the fireplace, and which, departing, rests as a bright gleam on the western hills. This ritual is in two distinct divisions, the one enacted as the Morning Sun approaches, bearing life and strength, the other as he withdraws in the evening, leaving with the people "those gifts which Tirawa sent him to bestow". In the interval between is a cycle of songs, the first beginning, "Hark the sound of their wings", which likens the noise and bustle of the Hako to a vast flock of birds, and continues with specific allusions to the master birds which are bound on the Feathered Stems.

This second day is brought to a conclusion in the evening by a repetition of the Invocation to the Visions, with a stronger emphasis on the supernatural origin of the rites, and the promise that the revelations shall again be vouchsafed to the Children through the Hako.

The third day, when the feminine forces are honoured, is very like the second in general plan, with the Dawn ritual as a prelude and the third and last Invocation to the Visions as its closing ceremony. The songs are to Mother Earth and to all which she brings forth to sustain the life of the people. "We sing: 'Behold here lies Mother Earth, of a truth she lies here to bring forth, and we give thanks that it is so; we give thanks for the fields of corn, and for

spreading trees and for the streams and rivers which flow over her. Of a truth we know that Mother Earth brings these forth by the power of Tirawa-atius, Father of All Things.'

"When these songs are finished, we make the smoke offering to Tirawa through the Mother Eagle Calumet, and then I, as Kurahus, sing the songs which teach the lessons of the birds to the Children, beginning with one about the nest where the eggs lie in safety. We learn from the birds that we must care for our children even before they are born; that we must be cheerful and thankful for all that we receive; that we must protect and guide our families, and be faithful in storm and in sunshine, by day and by night. Through following these teachings we shall receive in full measure the gifts of the Hako. The words of these songs are few, but the story has come down to us."

When the Visions are all invoked for the third and last time, there is an especial summons to the shades of the Ancients, who are besought to come from their abode on high to give recognition to the Son; and furthermore to sanctify by their presence the rites which have already taken place, as well as those which are to follow on the fifth and last day, when the secret and most sacred part of the entire ceremony will be celebrated.

"The Visions come in answer to our song; they hover over us and recognize him who has been made our Son, and we all rest and are quiet in their presence. As they depart to their dwelling place above, we give thanks in our hearts that they have come to us."

The departure of the Ancients ends the outer ceremonies. In them all the Powers in turn have been called to the Lodge; in response, the birds of the Hako have flown thither, the Visions have descended and entered, the Dawn and the Stars and the Day have brought their gifts, and throughout it all the abstract idea of the great creative forces in their cosmic aspect, has been firmly held in mind.

There ensues a day of rest, after which the definite promises made by the Fathers to the Children must be fulfilled in a most sacred rite, which is carefully concealed from all but the immediate participants. The mystic stirring of the Dawn birth, the brooding fruitfulness of Earth and Mother Eagle, the virile potency of Sun Father and the Man Eagle, and, above all thinking, the overshadowing spirit of Tirawa, are to be focussed and concentrated in the one person of a Chosen Child, a little son of the Son; through the investiture he will become the child of the tribe, the bearer of new life to the coming generations.

This inner ceremony, which is the very heart of the drama, lasts only a few hours, beginning shortly after sundown of the fourth day with a review of the lessons already inculcated, which are summed up by the Kurahus as follows:

"We have now made the four-times-four circuit of the Lodge. In the first circuit we have recollected Mother Earth, and the Corn symbols; in the next, the Eagles which are messengers of the Powers above; in the third, the prayer and offerings of this ceremony, and in the fourth the Powers themselves, the

Mighty Power above, and all those which are with the Hako. Four times four means completeness. The night is nearly over and the children leave the Lodge and go to their homes.

"At the first signs of morning, when Dawn is again coming to birth and all the creatures are beginning to stir with the life of the new Day, the Fathers rise and, taking up the Hako from its ceremonial rest, they march forth singing, to seek the Chosen Child. The song is the same one which we sang when we first entered the village and sought the Lodge where the Son was awaiting us. We have been four days and four nights in that Lodge, singing the songs and performing the rites, and now we seek the Son's own dwelling, that we may carry the Sacred Objects to his fireplace and there touch with them his Child, that the promises we have brought may be fulfilled."

Before this dwelling of the Son the group pauses, singing the last stanza, and at its close a party of warriors, a purely masculine element, storms into the lodge as though to capture and hold it, shouting and recounting, all at one and the same moment, the deeds of prowess and daring which are their special gifts from Tirawa. Then as the Babel of boasting dies down, the Hako itself, with gifts of Peace and Quiet, enters the passage-way, and going straight to the boy, endows him with powers of endurance, wisdom, and fruitfulness; and lastly the Kurahus, holding the joined Calumets, one close-wrapped within the feathers of the other, touches him with Creative Power.

Thus encompassed with all the forces of life, the little creature is coaxed by a crooning song to move and take for himself the four steps which symbolize the progress of existence; and straightway when he has complied, he is gently lifted to the back of one of the Ancients and borne to the ceremonial Lodge, followed by the Kurahus and the Hako group, all singing together. Within the Lodge the child is seated in the Holy Place, while the members range themselves in their prescribed positions, forming a close circle about him; and this inner group is in turn shielded from all observation by a curved line of warriors which stretches from wall to wall, shoulder touching shoulder, so that their robes, reaching the ground, form a solid screen. The face of the child is to be inscribed with the signs of Tirawa, and no profane eye may be a witness. Invisible symbolic lines are traced first with living water and next with a brush of fresh grasses,—two of the Lesser Powers; next comes the sacrificial ointment, the sign of plenty, and the red pigment which is spread over his entire face to show that the full radiance and vigour of the Sun are upon him; and lastly all the lines of the symbol are carefully retraced in blue paint, the colour of the Above, and the visage of Tirawa-atius is made visible. The arch of the sky is across the forehead, and from the middle point, the zenith, a line which is the breath of Tirawa descends straight to the point where it can become one with the breath of the child and be indrawn to his heart. Forthwith the aged Kurahus, standing above him, opens his hand and lets fall over the dark hair, downy breast-feathers taken from a spot near the heart of the Mother Eagle, so that he appears to be resting among the soft white clouds of Tirawa's abode; while a tiny white feather from the Man

Eagle is tied in such wise that it flutters over his head without ceasing as if it were indeed the ever-moving breath of the spirit.

Thus completely invested with the sacred signs, the Child is made to gaze in silence upon his reflected image. The mirror prepared for the rite is the direct gift of the Earth Mother, for it is made of wood from her forests, fashioned into a bowl shaped like the inverted dome of the sky, and it is filled with water from her living streams. As he gazes upon its clearly reflecting surface, he is for a moment shown his own young visage blended and made one with the symbolic visage of Tirawa-atius, and immediately thereupon, the black covering which must veil the mysteries, is thrown over and about him. "Only Tirawa looks on them and knows all they mean. We do not look on them for they are holy."

Now, centred around the Holy Place of the hearth, circles are drawn at the Four World Quarters to represent the nests of tribal life and of kinship groups; "and as we draw these circles on the ground we think that Tirawa has made the Earth, where all the people live, quite round like a nest. If you go on a high hill and look about, you will see that the Earth touches the Sky on every side and that it is a circular enclosure."

Into each of the inscribed circles, the Child, freshly endowed with the life of Tirawa, is carried in turn and allowed to rest for a moment, while at his feet is laid an oriole's nest containing certain symbolic objects. Thus he bears the good gifts of the Hako to his people. This act is carefully hidden from sight by an enshrouding robe, and no one but the officiating priest knows what is happening beneath it, "For no one knows when a bird lays its eggs or when a new birth takes place. Only Tirawa knows when life is given."

After the four requisite repetitions of the mystery, the Child is again seated on the Holy Place while an offering of incense is made by throwing sacrificial ointment and aromatic grasses on the glowing coals of the fire. Silently the participants watch the sweet-smelling smoke curl upwards until it is well on its way to Tirawa, and then the Kurahus waves the Hako Articles back and forth through it, and, with hands impregnated by the odour, strokes the Child. Thus he receives its blessing, and in turn the smoke as it rises will bear a witness of him to Tirawa. When the other members of the party in like manner have shared this benediction, all traces of the tribal nests and of the incense fire are painstakingly obliterated, and the Father bears the Child, still veiled, outside the door of the Lodge to watch the presentation of gifts.

This is a joyous interlude; deeds of heroism are recounted and enacted, while two youths weave with indescribable grace and lightness the intricate pattern of an Eagle Dance, and one by one the Children lead up the ponies which are given to the Fathers in grateful recognition of the blessings they have brought.

When all the presentations have been made, the group of inner participants once more and for the last time retires within the Lodge, and the Child is again carried to the Holy Place behind the fire. With gestures which follow

the downward path of Tirawa's breath, he is stroked with the Corn Symbol and with the Mated Stems, while the Kurahus bows over him singing:

"Breathe on him!
Breathe on him
Life thou alone can give to him!"

Concerning this part of the ceremony the aged Indian said to Miss Fletcher: "The whole purport of this song is hidden from the people; it means, 'All that I have been doing to you, little Child, has been a prayer to call down the breath of Tirawa-atius, to give you life and strength and to teach you that you belong to him,—that you are his Child'; and now I pray with all my spirit to Tirawa to come down and touch with his breath the symbol of his face and all the other symbols that are on the Child. This is a very solemn act because we believe that Tirawa, although not seen by us, sends down his breath as we pray, calling on him to come.

"As I sing this song now in Washington with you, I cannot help shedding tears. I have never sung it before except as I stood looking down upon the little Child and praying for him in my heart. There is no little Child here, but you are here writing all these things down that they may not be lost, and that our children may know what their fathers believed and practised in this ceremony. So as I sing I am calling to Tirawa-atius to send down his breath upon you. I am praying for you with all my spirit."

When the stroking motion has been made the requisite number of times, and the song is finished, the Father of the Hako kneels, and with utter gentleness divests the Child of the painted signs and of all the sacred symbols. Wrapping these together with the other Hako Articles in the wildcat skin, he lays the bundle in the boy's arms, and taking him by the hand leads him to the place where his own father, the Son of the Hako, is standing, ready for the closing act of the ceremony. The special promises of the Hako, New Life and Fruitfulness, Peace and Security, are in the arms of the Child, consecrated and dedicated to be their bearer; and as the Son accepts the proffered symbols from the hands of his own offspring, the desired tie, as strong as the tie of kinship, is established and complete.

The Child released from his official greatness runs out into the sunlight to play; and, after a general exchange of courtesies, the people return to their daily avocations while the Hako party is free to break the long fast, which has lasted from the afternoon of the previous day, with a farewell feast before the Fathers depart on their homeward way.

As this account draws to an end I feel more and more deeply the difficulty of conveying its actual quality in any abbreviated form, for its sheer length, the wealth of the inter-related and significant detail, are the warp and woof of its character. It is the meticulous and formal care with which materials for the sacred articles are gathered and prepared, the insistence on special potencies inherent in red and blue and yellow pigment, which gives the symbols the

impress of magic power; the very meaning of a song may lie in the fact that it has an eight-fold form or is given a four-times-four rendition; each prolongation of a syllable or change of rhythm is a necessity—for thus the mind is held one-pointed and concentrated in supplication, thus the High Powers are assured of unbroken attention. I have throughout sternly resisted the temptation to suggest parallels or interpretations, or in any way to interfere with the Kurahus' straight-forward explanation, and I will end simply with his final words to Miss Fletcher, when at long last their joint task was finished:

"During the days I have been talking to you, and during the days and nights that we have worked together, my heart has gone out to you. I have done what has never been done before; I have given you all the songs of this ceremony and explained them to you. I never thought that I, of all my people, should be the one to give this ancient ceremony to be preserved, and I wonder over it as I sit here. I think over my long life with its many experiences; of the great number of Pawnees who have been with me in war, nearly all of whom have been killed in battle. When I remember all the people of my tribe who have died during my lifetime, and of those in other tribes who have fallen by our hands, they are so many they make a vast covering over Mother Earth. I once walked with these prostrate forms; I did not fall but passed on, wounded sometimes but not unto death, until I am here to-day,—doing this thing,—singing these sacred songs into that great pipe (the graphophone) and telling you these ancient rites of my people.

"It must be that I have been preserved for this purpose, otherwise I should be lying back there among the dead."

E. A.

All-knowledge begins and ends with wonder, but the first wonder is the child of ignorance, the second wonder is the parent of adoration.—COLERIDGE.

A HINDU CHÊLA'S DIARY*

FROM *THE PATH*, VOL. I, NOS. 3, 4, 5, AND 6, JUNE TO SEPTEMBER, 1886.

[In the month of December he arrived at Benares, on what he hoped would be his last pilgrimage. As much as I am able to decipher of this curious manuscript, written in a mixture of Tamil—the South Indian language—with Mahratta, which, as you know, is entirely dissimilar, shows that he made many pilgrimages to India's sacred places, whether by mere impulse or upon actual direction, I know not. If he had been only an ordinary religiously disposed Hindu we might be able to come to some judgment hereupon, for the pilgrimages might have been made in order to gain merit, but as he must long ago have risen above the flowery chains of even the Vedas, we cannot really tell for what reason these journeys were made. Although, as you know, I have long had possession of these papers, the time had not until now seemed ripe to give them out. He had, when I received them, already long passed away from these busy scenes to those far busier, and now I give you liberty to print the fragmentary tale without description of his person. These people are, you know, not disposed to have accurate descriptions of themselves floating about. They being real disciples, never like to say that they are,—a manner quite contrary to that of those famed professors of occult science who opportunely or inopportunely declare their supposed chêlaship from the house top.—TRANSLATOR.]

" . . . . Twice before have I seen these silent temples standing by the rolling flood of sacred Ganges. They have not changed, but in me what changes have occurred! And yet that cannot be, for the I changeth not, but only the veil wrapped about, is either torn away or more closely and thickly

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Note.—"A Hindu Chêla's Diary" was reprinted in the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY of April and July, 1916; but as it is a classic in our literature, we reproduce it again for the benefit of those to whom the back numbers of the QUARTERLY may not be accessible.

All the footnotes are exactly as they appeared in *The Path;* and the signature [ED.] with which some of them end, refers to the Editor of *The Path*, William Q. Judge.—EDITORS OF THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY.

* The original MS. of this Diary as far as it goes is in our possession. The few introductory lines are by the friend who communicated the matter to us.—[ED.]

folded round to the disguising of the reality. . . . . It is now seven months since I began to use the privilege of listening to Kunâla. Each time before, that I came to see him, implacable fate drove me back. It was Karma, the just law, which compels when we would not, that prevented me. Had I faltered, and returned to the life even then so far in the past, my fate in this incarnation would have been sealed—and he would have said nothing. Why? Happy was I that I knew the silence would not have indicated in him any loss of interest in my welfare, but only that the same Karma prevented interference. Very soon after first seeing him I felt that he was not what he appeared exteriorly to be. Then the feeling grew into a belief within a short time so strong that four or five times I thought of throwing myself at his feet and begging him to reveal himself to me. But I thought that was useless, as I knew that I was quite impure and could not be trusted with that secret. If I remained silent I thought that he would confide to me whenever he found me worthy of it. I thought he must be some great Hindu Adept who had assumed that illusionary form. But there this difficulty arose, for I knew that he received letters from various relatives in different parts, and this would compel him to practise the illusion all over the globe, for some of those relatives were in other countries, where he had been too. Various explanations suggested themselves to me. . . . . I was right in my original conception of Kunâla that he is some great Indian Adept. Of this subject I constantly talked with him since—although I fear I am not, and perhaps shall not be in this life, worthy of their company. My inclination has always been in this direction. I always thought of retiring from this world and giving myself up to devotion. To Kunâla I often expressed this intention, so that I might study this philosophy, which alone can make man happy in this world. But then he usually asked me what I would do *there* alone? He said that instead of gaining my object I might perhaps become insane by being left alone in the jungles with no one to guide me; that I was foolish enough to think that by going into the jungles I could fall in with an Adept; and that if I really wanted to gain my object I should have to work in the reform, in and through which I had met so many good men and himself also; and when the Higher Ones, whom I dare not mention by any other names, were satisfied with me, they themselves would call me away from the busy world and teach me in private. And when I foolishly asked him many times to give me the names and addresses of some of those Higher Ones, he said once to me: 'One of our Brothers has told me that as you are so much after me I had better tell you once for all that I have no right to give you any information about them, but if you go on asking Hindus you meet what they know about the matter you might hear of them, and one of those Higher Ones may perhaps throw himself in your way without your knowing him, and will tell you what you should do.' These were orders, and I knew I must wait, and still I knew that through Kunâla only would I have my object fulfilled. . . . .

"I then asked one or two of my own countrymen, and one of them said he had seen two or three such men, but that they were not quite what he thought

to be '*Raj Yogs.*' He also said he had heard of a man who had appeared several times in Benares, but that nobody knew where he lived. My disappointment grew more bitter, but I never lost the firm confidence that Adepts do live in India and can still be found among us. No doubt too there are a few in other countries, else why had Kunâla been to them. . . . . In consequence of a letter from Vishnurama, who said that a certain X.[1] lived in Benares, and that Swamiji K. knew him. However, for certain reasons I could not address Swamiji K. directly, and when I asked him if *he* knew X. he replied: 'If there be such a man here at all he is not known.' Thus evasively on many occasions he answered me, and I saw that all my expectations in going to Benares were only air castles. I thought I had gained only the consolation that I was doing a part of my duty. So I wrote again to Nilakant: 'As directed by you I have neither let him know what I know of him nor what my own intentions are. He seems to think that in this I am working to make money, and as yet I have kept him in the dark as regards myself, and am myself groping in the dark. Expecting enlightenment from you, etc.' . . . . The other day Nilakant came suddenly here and I met Sw. K. and him together, when to my surprise K. at once mentioned X., saying he knew him well and that he often came to see him, and then he offered to take us there. But just as we were going, arrived at the place an English officer who had done Kunâla a service in some past time. He had in some way heard of X. and was permitted to come. Such are the complications of Karma. It was absolutely necessary that he should go too, although no doubt his European education would never permit him more than half to accept the doctrine of Karma, so interwoven backward and forward in our lives, both those now, those past and those to come. At the interview with X., I could gain nothing, and so we came away. The next day came X. to see us. He never speaks of himself, but as 'this body'. He told me that he had first been in the body of a Fakir, who, upon having his hand disabled by a shot he received while he passed the fortress of Bhurtpore, had to change his body and choose another, the one he was now in. A child of about seven years of age was dying at that time, and so, before the complete physical death, this Fakir had entered the body and afterwards used it as his own. He is, therefore, doubly not what he seems to be. As a Fakir he had studied Yoga science for 65 years, but that study having been arrested at the time he was disabled, leaving him unequal to the task he had to perform, he had to choose this other one. In his present body he is 53 years, and consequently the inner X. is 118 years old. . . . . In the night I heard him talking with Kunâla, and found that each had the same Guru, who himself is a very great Adept, whose age is 300 years, although in appearance he seems to be only 40.[2] He will in a few centuries enter the body of a *Kshatriya*,[3] and do some great deeds for India, but the time had not yet come.

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[1] I find it impossible to decipher this name.

[2] There is a peculiarity in this, that all accounts of Cagliostro, St. Germain and other Adepts, give the apparent age as forty only.—[Ed.]

[3] The warrior caste of India.—[Ed.]

"Yesterday I went with Kunâla to look at the vast and curious temples left here by our forefathers. Some are in ruins, and others only showing the waste of time. What a difference between my appreciation of these buildings now, with Kunâla to point out meanings I never saw, and that which I had when I saw them upon my first pilgrimage, made so many years ago with my father."

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[A large portion of the MS. here, although written in the same characters as the rest, has evidently been altered in some way by the writer, so as to furnish clues meant for himself. It might be deciphered by a little effort, but I must respect his desire to keep those parts of it, which are thus changed, inviolate. It seems that some matters are here jotted down relating to secret things, or at least, to things that he desired should not be understood at a glance. So I will write out what small portion of it might be easily told without breaking any confidences.

It is apparent that he had often been before to the holy city of Benares, and had merely seen it as a place of pilgrimage for the religious. Then, in his sight, those famous temples were only temples. But now he found, under the instruction of Kunâla, that every really ancient building in the whole collection had been constructed with the view to putting into imperishable stone, the symbols of a very ancient religion. Kunâla, he says, told him, that, although the temples were made when no supposition of the ordinary people of those eras leaned toward the idea that nations could ever arise who would be ignorant of the truths then universally known, or that darkness would envelop the intellect of men, there were many Adepts then well known to the rulers and to the people. They were not yet driven by inexorable fate to places remote from civilization, but lived in the temples, and while not holding temporal power, they exercised a moral sway which was far greater than any sovereignty of earth.[4] And they knew that the time would come when the heavy influence of the dark age would make men to have long forgotten even that such things had existed, or that any doctrines other than the doctrine based on the material rights of *mine* and *thine*, had ever been held. If the teachings were left simply to either paper or papyrus or parchment, they would be easily lost, because of that decay which is natural to vegetable or animal membrane. But stone lasts, in an easy climate, for ages. So these Adepts, some of them here and there being really themselves Maha Rajahs,[5] caused the temples to be built in forms, and with such symbolic ornaments, that future races might decipher doctrines from them. In this,

[4] In the ancient Aztec civilization in Mexico, the Sacerdotal order was very numerous. At the head of the whole establishment were two high priests, elected from the order, solely for their qualifications, as shown by their previous conduct in a subordinate station. They were equal in dignity and inferior only to the sovereign, who rarely acted without their advice in weighty matters of private concern. (Sahagun *Hist. de Nueva España, lib. 2; lib. 3, cap. 9-Torq. Mon. Ind. lib. 8, cap. 20; lib. 9, cap. 3, 56;* cited by Prescott in vol. 1. *Conq. Mex. p. 66.*)—[Ed.]

[5] King or Ruler.

great wisdom, he says, is apparent, for to have carved them with sentences in the prevailing language would have defeated the object, since languages also change, and as great a muddle would have resulted as in the case of the Egyptian hieroglyphics, unless a key stone had also been prepared; but that itself might be lost, or in its own turn be unintelligible. The ideas underneath symbols do not alter, no matter what might be the language, and symbols are clear immortally, because they are founded in nature itself. In respect to this part of the matter, he writes down that Kunâla informed him that the language used then was not Sanscrit, but a far older one now altogether unknown in the world.

From a detached sentence in the MS., it is shadowed forth that Kunâla referred to a curious building put up many years ago in another part of India and now visible, by which he illustrated the difference between an intelligent construction and an unintelligent one. This building was the product of the brain of a Chandala,[6] who had been enriched through a curious freak. The Rajah had been told by his astrologers, upon some event occurring, that he must give an immense sum of money to the first person he saw next day, they intending to present themselves at an early hour. Next day, most unusually early, the Rajah arose, looked out of the window, and beheld this Chandala. Calling his astrologers and council together, and the poor sweeper into his presence, he presented him with lacs upon lacs of rupees, and with the money the Chandala built a granite building having immense monolithic chains hanging down from its four corners. Its only symbology was in the change of the chains of fate; from poor low caste to rich low caste. Without the story the building tells us nothing.

But the symbols of the temples, not only those carved on them, but also their conjuncture, need no story, nor knowledge of historical events. Such is the substance of what he writes down as told him by Kunâla. He says also that this symbology extends not only to doctrines and cosmology, but also to laws of the human constitution, spiritual and material. The explanation of this portion is contained in the altered and cryptic parts of the MS. He then goes on]:

". . . . Yesterday, just after sunset, while Kunâla and X. were talking, Kunâla suddenly seemed to go into an unusual condition, and about ten minutes afterwards a large quantity of malwa flowers fell upon us from the ceiling.

"I must now go to——and do that piece of business which he ordered done. My duty is clear enough, but how am I to know if I shall perform it properly. . . . . When I was there and after I had finished my work and was preparing to return here, a wandering fakir met me and asked if he could find from me the proper road to Karli. I directed him, and he then put to me some questions that looked as if he knew what had been my business; he also had a very

[6] A low caste man, *e.g.*, a sweeper. Such a building can now be seen at Bijapur, India.—[Ed.]

significant look upon his face, and several of his questions were apparently directed to getting me to tell him a few things Kunâla had told me just before leaving Benares with an injunction of secrecy. The questions did not on the face show that, but were in the nature of inquiries regarding such matters, so that if I had not been careful, I would have violated the injunction. He then left me saying: 'You do not know me but we may see each other.' . . . . I got back last night and saw only X., to whom I related the incident with the fakir, and he said that, 'It was none other than Kunâla himself using that fakir's body who had said those things, and if you were to see that fakir again he would not remember you and would not be able to repeat his questions, as he was for the time being taken possession of for the purpose, by Kunâla, who often performs such things.' I then asked him if in that case Kunâla had really entered the fakir's body, as I have a strange reluctance toward asking Kunâla such questions, and X. replied that if I meant to ask if he had really and in fact entered the fakir's person, the answer was no, but that if I meant to ask if Kunâla had overcome that fakir's senses, substituting his own, the answer was, yes; leaving me to make my own conclusions. . . . . I was fortunate enough yesterday to be shown the process pursued in either entering an empty body, or in using one which has its own occupant. I found that in both cases it was the same, and the information was also conveyed that a Bhut[7] goes through just the same road in taking command of the body or senses of those unfortunate women of my country who sometimes are possessed by them. And the Bhut also sometimes gets into possession of a part only of the obsessed person's body, such as an arm or a hand, and this they do by influencing that part of the brain that has relation with that arm or hand; in the same way with the tongue and other organs of speech. With any person but Kunâla I would not have allowed my own body to be made use of for the experiment. But I felt perfectly safe, that he would not only let me in again, but also that he would not permit any stranger, man or gandharba,[8] to come in after him. We went to ——— and he. . . . . The feeling was that I had suddenly stepped out into freedom. He was beside me and at first I thought he had but begun. But he directed me to look, and there on the mat I saw my body, apparently unconscious. As I looked . . . . the body of myself, opened its eyes and arose. It was then superior to me, for Kunâla's informing power moved and directed it. It seemed even to speak to me. Around it, attracted to it by those magnetic influences, wavered and moved astral shapes, that vainly tried to whisper in the ear or to enter by the same road. In vain! They seemed to be pressed away by the air or surroundings of Kunâla. Turning to look at him, and expecting to see him in a state of samadhi, he was smiling as if nothing, or at the very most, but a part, of his power had been taken away . . . . another instant and I was again myself, the mat felt cool to my touch, the Bhuts were gone, and Kunâla bade me rise.

[7] An obsessing astral shell. The Hindus consider them to be the reliquiæ of deceased persons.—[Ed.]

[8] Nature spirit or elemental.—[Ed.]

"He has told me to go to the mountains of ——— where ——— and ——— usually live, and that even if I were not to see anybody the first time, the magnetized air in which they live would do me much good. They do not generally stop in one place, but always shift from one place to another. They, however, all meet together on certain days of the year in a certain place near Bhadrinath, in the northern part of India. He reminded me that as India's sons are becoming more and more wicked, those Adepts have gradually been retiring more and more toward the north, to the Himalaya mountains. . . . . Of what great consequence it is for me to be always with Kunâla. And now X. tells me this same thing that I have always felt. All along I have felt and do still feel strongly that I have been once his most obedient and humble disciple in a former existence. All my hopes and future plans are therefore centred in him. My journey therefore to up country has done me one good, that of strengthening my belief, which is the chief foundation on which the grand structure is to be built. . . . . As I was walking past the end of Ramalinga's compound holding a small lamp of European make, and while there was no wind, the light three several times fell low. I could not account for it. Both Kunâla and X. were far away. But in another moment, the light suddenly went out altogether, and as I stopped, the voice of revered Kunâla, who I supposed was many miles away, spoke to me, and I found him standing there. For one hour we talked; and he gave me good advice, although I had not asked it—thus it is always that when I go fearlessly forward and ask for nothing I get help at an actual critical moment—he then blessed me and went away. Nor could I dare to look in what direction. In that conversation, I spoke of the light going down and wanted an explanation, but he said I had nothing to do with it. I then said I wanted to know, as I could explain it in two ways, viz: 1st, that he did it himself, or 2nd, that some one else did it for him. He replied, that even if it were done by somebody else, *no Yogee will do a thing unless he sees the desire in another Yogee's mind.*[9] The significance of this drove out of my mind all wish to know *who* did it, whether himself, or an elemental or another person, for it is of more importance for me to know even a part of the laws governing such a thing, than it is to know who puts those laws into operation. Even some blind concatenation of nature might put such natural forces in effect in accordance with the same laws, so that a knowledge that nature did it would be no knowledge of any consequence.

"I have always felt and still feel strongly that I have already once studied this sacred philosophy with Kunâla, and that I must have been, in a previous life, his most obedient and humble disciple.[10] This must have been a fact, or

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[9] This sentence is of great importance. The Occidental mind delights much more in effects, personalities and authority, than in seeking for causes, just as many Theosophists have with persistency sought to know when and where Madame Blavatsky did some feat in magic, rather than in looking for causes or laws governing the production of phenomena. In this italicized sentence is the clue to many things for those who can see. —[Ed.]

[10] In reply to several inquiries as to the meaning of *Chêla*, we answer that it here means an accepted disciple of an Adept. The word, in general, means, *Disciple.*

else how to account for the feelings created in me when I first met him, although no special or remarkable circumstances were connected with that event. All my hopes and plans are centred in him, and nothing in the world can shake my confidence in him especially when several of my Brahmin acquaintances tell me the same things without previous consultation. . . . .

"I went to the great festival of Durga yesterday, and spent nearly the whole day looking in the vast crowd of men, women, children and mendicants for some of Kunâla's friends, for he once told me never to be sure that they were not near me, but I found none who seemed to answer my ideas. As I stood by the ghaut at the river side thinking that perhaps I was left alone to try my patience, an old and apparently very decrepit Bairagee plucked my sleeve and said: 'Never expect to see any one, but always be ready to answer if they speak to you; it is not wise to peer outside of yourself for the great followers of Vasudeva: look rather within.'

"This amazed me, as I was expecting him to beg or to ask me for information. Before my wits returned, he had with a few steps mingled with a group of people, and in vain searched I for him: he had disappeared. But the lesson is not lost.

"To-morrow I return to I ———.

"Very wearying indeed, in a bodily sense, was the work of last week, and especially of last evening, and upon lying down on my mat last night after continuing work far into the night I fell quickly sound asleep. I had been sleeping an hour or two when with a start I awoke, to find myself in perfect solitude, and only the horrid howling of the jackals in the jungle to disturb me. The moon was brightly shining and I walked over to the window of this European-modelled house, threw it open and looked out. Finding that sleep had departed, I began again on those palm leaves. Just after I had begun, a tap arrested my attention and I opened the door. Overjoyed was I then to see Kunâla standing there, once more unexpected.

" 'Put on your turban and come with me,' he said and turned away.

(To be continued)

Why should we open our hearts to the world? It laughs at our weaknesses; it does not believe in our virtues; it does not pity our sorrows.—CHÂTEAUBRIAND.

WHY I JOINED THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

IT is necessary to recall, from time to time, that the ways of Karma are marvellous and its designs past finding out. A member of The Theosophical Society, passing a man in the street, may well say to himself with a sincerity as great as John Bunyan's: "There, but for the grace of God, go I." He cannot explain why a divine opportunity came to him and not to others whose virtues shine so brightly by contrast with his own.

I can imagine someone asking: "If you cannot explain why you joined the T. S., why write an article about it?" I might reply: "Because I have been asked to write an article about it"; but I think that there is a more satisfactory answer.

We are not automata. We were free to respond or not to respond to the opportunity of joining the Society and of working for its objects. One can at least describe, as truthfully as possible, the stages through which we passed from original indifference to enthusiastic response. And since we are all essentially much alike, the record of one such experience should be of some value and interest to all.

When I first heard of Theosophy my mood was not receptive, nor was any sympathy generated through the circumstance that I had friends who were members of the T. S. This indifference, which was almost antipathy, can be readily understood. In those days I lived almost entirely in a maze of metaphysical speculation. I had some sort of notion that I was destined to become a Columbus among the philosophers, the discoverer of an unknown metaphysical continent. For that reason alone I tended to disapprove of the theories and beliefs of other people. I was a college student at the time, and most of the moral, social, domestic and financial problems, which make life interesting, did not yet exist for me.

In justice to myself, however, it may be added that I did have an elementary but real reverence for Truth. Therefore, I found it impossible to rest permanently in any of the systems which my mind was continually inventing. There was even the danger that I should fall into the abyss of consistent mental negation. While one-half of the mind was building its "critiques of pure reason," the other half was cultivating the spirit of skepticism.

This skepticism had been applied with devastating effect to the various "orthodoxies" of the world. At a very early age I reacted violently against the Church. Then I had a "scientific period," when I specialized in biology, and finally made the discovery that the scientists were in general as dogmatic and bigoted as the priests. The philosophers pleased me better, for some of them were also great poets, but it was so easy to demolish their thought-

structures merely by questioning the premisses upon which they reposed. It is fortunate that I could not feel better satisfied with any of my own theories concerning the nature of the Universe.

This description of my mental condition at college is not exactly clear, but it is at least as clear as was the condition itself. If I had remained at the university indefinitely, it is to be feared that the net result would have been nothing more inspiring than a disappointed and rather cynical professor.

What may be called the science of Theosophy began to interest me after I had left college and come into contact with the world of American business, where one is held strictly accountable for one's actions. I emerged from the shell of academic irresponsibility, and I did not like the atmosphere which I had to breathe. My mind continued—it still continues, for that matter—to agitate itself about the origin and being of the Cosmos; but it was forced to face other problems as well, problems suggested by personal suffering, by the compulsion of duty, by friendly or hostile relations with others. I read little theosophical literature, but I had a friend who bravely introduced Theosophy into our conversations. Some of the ideas which he presented seemed to explain the very things which troubled me. I said to myself that if Truth could be discovered by the exercise of logic and common sense, Theosophy would, indeed, be a translation of the Truth.

I began to read the QUARTERLY. Its articles and editorials upon the War interested and impressed me. I had liked the theory of Theosophy, and now I began to like the way in which students of Theosophy practised what they preached. Still I held back. How could these people really believe what they preached? It is one thing to recognize the objective beauty of a theory; it is another thing to have reasons for believing that a theory is true.

Slowly I began to understand; understanding is still coming slowly. But the first dawning of this understanding brightened enough for me to ask permission to join The Theosophical Society.

My faithful friend had always insisted that Theosophy was not a dogmatic system, and I had always smiled benevolently at him. Then it occurred to me that he might be right.

I read and questioned more actively. There could be no doubt of it. The theory or science of Theosophy was a collection of hypotheses which were not to be blindly accepted by the student, but were to serve as a guide to experiment whereby he could prove them for himself, as others had already proved them. Here was the revelation of the true and universal experimental method, the source of all sciences and the justification of the life which is religious in substance and not only in outward form. Here was a system of thought, explaining—as profoundly as it can be explained—the nature of the Universe and of the human being which is born from the Universe, and I was invited to verify it through the development of my own nature.

What could have prevented me from joining The Theosophical Society?

R. S.

CHHANDOGYA UPANISHAD

PART III, SECTIONS 12–19

MAN LINKED WITH THE LOGOS

THE great inspiration of these instructions for disciples is the Logos, the Divine Mind, the Divine Voice, that sang a miraculous song, which brought the worlds into being: for the worlds are the song of the Divine Voice.

As a song has many tones and many parts, so also has the mighty song of the Divine Voice. These tones are celestial powers, the great potencies that are revealed in the manifold miracle of the manifested worlds. As melody and harmony run through the song, so also with the divine song that breathes forth the worlds: melody, harmony, beauty everywhere.

In the sections here translated, there is a further thought, of vital moment for the disciple. It is this: the ordered divine powers of the mighty Logos, each with its creative potency, are present, each one of them completely represented, in the being of the disciple. The divine powers which build the worlds, the divine powers which are the worlds, build him also, and are the very essence of his being.

The disciple is taught to recognize these divine powers in himself, to know them, to use them. He is taught a further lesson which, when fully learned, will make him more than a disciple, will make him an immortal, potent and creative as the Logos is creative.

The symbol with which the first of these Sections begins is the measure of the Vedic hymns called the Gayatri, a measure containing twenty-four syllables. One stanza, attributed to the great Rajput sage and seer, Vishvamitra, belongs to the Third Circle of the Rig Veda. It may be rendered thus:

"Let us meditate on the fair radiance of the divine Spiritual Sun, which may lead forward our souls!"

Therefore, the Gayatri is here taken as the symbol of the Spiritual Sun, the Logos as singing the divine song. That Logos sings the worlds into being, and, having brought them into being, saves and upholds them by the sustaining power of the divine song.

The Gayatri, as the song of the Logos, forms all the worlds, and among them this world which we inhabit, and which is a living manifestation of the potencies of the Logos; divine powers constitute it, mould it, maintain it.

The same divine powers constitute and sustain the body of man; each of his bodily powers is made of the essence of the Logos. In the body of man are established the life-breaths, the living powers through which the Logos brings the latent Divine Thought into manifestation.

The same powers of the Logos have in man another and higher, more divine manifestation "in this Heart which is in the man within;" that is, in the Spiritual Man, whom the disciple seeks to become, the man who wears the vesture of the colour of the sun, the heir of immortality. The same powers reappear in this Spiritual Man, purified, spiritualized, glorified. But the manifested world, of which the body of man is a portion, far from including all things, is said here to be but a fourth part of the whole. What the four parts are, with their relation to the life of the disciple, has already been told in the *Mandukya Upanishad*. One part is manifested here; three parts are immortal in the heavens.

Then follows the identification of Brahma, the Eternal, with the radiant Ether. The word so translated is Akasha, literally "Shining-toward", and meaning both the extension of Space and all that fills Space; both the container of universal Life and the Life which it contains. The radiant Ether is, therefore, identical with the manifested Logos: it is the primal stage or degree of manifestation, within which, and through the powers of which, all subsequent manifestation takes place. So far concerning "the radiant Ether which is outside the man." But there is also the "dim star within", the first spark of the light of the Logos, and as the disciple watches, worshipping, the star grows until it is one with "the infinite Light." The radiant Ether within the man is the same as the radiant Ether without, since both are the Logos. There are further stages: the radiant Ether in the man within, and the radiant Ether in the inner Heart, the Spiritual Man.

Then follows a more detailed identification of the powers of man as powers of the Logos. As symbols of the powers of the Logos, are taken the Sun, the Moon, the Fire-lord, the Lord of fructifying rain, the Wind, which is the Great Breath. With the Sun is correlated the power of seeing, since through the Sun's light we see, but that Sun is again the illuminating Logos, and the seeing is divine vision. With the Moon is correlated hearing, for the Moon, "the measurer," measurer of the hours, the days, the weeks, the months, the lunar year, is here, as always, the symbol of Mind, since through mind we hear and through mind we measure. With the Fire-lord, magnetic fire, is correlated the voice, since through the voice the magnetic fire is manifested in the chanting of the hymns. With the Lord of fructifying rain is correlated mind, since by the right use of the mind, by fructifying thought, the hidden intuitions are made manifest and bear their fruit. With the Great Breath is correlated the upward-breath, the divine power of aspiration, which breathes upward and inward toward the inner Heart, that breath of aspiration which is the immediate presence of the Logos in the consciousness of the disciple.

These five Brahma-spirits are the doorkeepers of the heavenly world: these same powers which appear in the outward life of the disciple, will, when they have been purified and awakened in the inner Heart, open to him the heavenly world. In his family a hero is born, who knows thus: the son, here as elsewhere, is symbol of the Spiritual Man, who is the reborn life of the disciple; that son is a hero, a strong son of the spiritual world.

And so the light that shines at the back of the heavens is the same as this light in the man within. Therefore, let the disciple steadily watch and worship, until the star within becomes the infinite light. What is said concerning the inner enkindling, which is the seeing of that light, appears to refer to a mystical force which represents the creative power of the Logos. The hearing of it is set forth at greater length in *The Voice of the Silence*, in the description of seven mystical sounds; the last tone is there likened to "the dull rumbling of a thunder-cloud", closely paralleling our text.

When the disciple has "attained to peace", he has reached a definite stage on his journey homeward. The flower of the soul has opened; he knows that the way has been found. Awakening to the presence of the Logos, let him reverence it as That from which all comes forth, That in which all shall finally be dissolved, That in which all breathes; That in which he himself lives and breathes, from which he has come forth, to which he seeks to return.

The eloquent passage which follows needs no commentary: it is one of the truths which echo through all expressions of the greater Mysteries: its symbols, like "the grain of mustard-seed", are universal.

The simile of "the treasure-house containing the mid-world", uses terms that are more limited, more conventional. Shankaracharya translates them somewhat as follows: the treasure-house is once more the inner Heart, the Spiritual Man, who is indeed the receptacle of many treasures, of many powers. This earth is the floor of the treasure-house, because the disciple enters the path while dwelling in this outer world, but the roof of the treasure-house is the heavens. The eastern quarter of the treasure-house is named the sacrificial ladle; that is, the instrument with which the offering of oil is added to the consecrated fire on the altar; the symbol is fitting, because the disciple begins with the oblation of his separate life in the great Life, which is the universal Fire. The southern quarter, named the overcoming, marks the disciple's overcoming of the limitations and barriers of his former deeds, in many lives; it is a stage of purification. The western quarter stands, in universal symbolism, for the doorway to the world of the hidden sun; the "queen", says Shankara's commentary, is the light of the dawn in that hidden world. The northern quarter is named well-endowed, because it possesses many hidden treasures. Here again is universal symbolism: the kingdom of heaven is like buried treasure, like the pearl of great price.

The sentence concerning lamentation for a son seems to take us back again to the simile of the birth of a hero: may the hero grow strong and increase in power, so that there may be no cause for lamentation.

"In this invincible treasure-house I take refuge, through that, through that, through that": this finds its interpretation in the later verses: "In the earth I take refuge, in the interspace I take refuge, in the sky I take refuge"; and this seems to be the equivalent of the sentence in *Light on the Path:* "Inquire of the earth, the air, and the water, of the secrets they hold for you. The development of your inner senses will enable you to do this."

When we come to the later sentence, "In the Fire-lord I take refuge, in the

Great Breath I take refuge, in the Sun I take refuge", we are once again in presence of symbols for powers of the Logos. The three Vedas are symbols of the records in which a knowledge of these powers is contained.

"Man, verily, is sacrifice": here again we have a picture of the path of the disciple, with the graded stages through which he passes on his way to the final victory. The beginning of the way is the morning sacrifice. Through this he must press forward, letting no obstacles hinder him, to the attainment symbolized by the midday sacrifice. Again he presses forward to the third sacrifice, finally completing the last stage of his journey as a disciple, to the attainment which is to make him more than a disciple. At each stage he must be indomitable, invincible, letting nothing afflict him or daunt him.

For the symbolism of the four parts of the Eternal we must go back again to *Mandukya Upanishad*, where the four parts of the Eternal are detailed.

Finally, we come to the great cosmic symbol of the world-egg, the significance of which seems to be, that the birth of a universe, the birth of a solar system, the birth of a child, and the birth of the Spiritual Man, all follow the same laws, and are manifestations, whether macrocosmic or microcosmic, of the same powers, the powers inherent in the Logos. The golden half of the covering of the world-egg is Spirit; the silver half is Matter. These are not two disjunct, adverse entities, but the two poles of the One. The new birth of the disciple obeys the same great laws. When he is reborn, there will come to him a great sound of rejoicing, filling him with joy, filling him with joy.

THE DISCIPLE AS CHILD OF THE LOGOS

The Gayatri, verily, is all that is here, whatever here has come into being. The Voice, verily, is the Gayatri. For the Voice sings (*gâyati*) and saves (*trâyate*) whatever here has come into being.

What, verily, this Gayatri is, that, verily, this earth is; for in it is established whatever here has come into being, nor does aught transcend it.

What, verily, this earth is, that, verily, is this body in the man; for in it are these life-breaths established, nor does any transcend it.

What, verily, this body in man is, that, verily, is this Heart which is in the man within, for in it these life-breaths are established, nor does any transcend it.

That, verily, is this Gayatri with four parts, sixfold, concerning which it is declared by the Rig verse:

> So great is the might of This,
> And Spirit is still mightier;
> One part of That is all beings,
> Three parts of That are the Immortal in heaven.

For that which is named Brahma, the Eternal, is that radiant Ether which is outside the man. That radiant Ether which is outside the man is the same, verily, as the radiant Ether in the man within. That radiant Ether which

is in the man within, that, verily, is the same as the radiant Ether in the inner Heart. That is the Fulness which goes not forth. Full Grace, which goes not forth, he gains who knows thus.

Of it, verily, of this Heart there are five channels for the Bright Powers.

That which is the channel of the East is the forward-breath, that is the power of vision, that is the Sun. Therefore, let him reverence it as fervour, as food to be eaten. Possessed of fervour and an eater of food he becomes, who knows thus.

And so that which is the channel of the South is the distributive-breath, that is the power of hearing, that is the Moon. Therefore, let him reverence it as grace and splendour. Gracious, splendid he becomes, who knows thus.

And so that which is the channel of the West is the downward-breath, that is the voice, that is the Fire-lord. Therefore, let him reverence it as the holy fire, as food to be eaten. Possessor of the holy fire, an eater of food he becomes, who knows thus.

And so that which is the channel of the North, that is the uniting-breath, that is mind, that is the Lord of fructifying rain. Therefore, let him reverence it as glory, and as the brightness of dawn. Possessed of glory, of the brightness of dawn he becomes, who knows thus.

And so that which is the channel of the Zenith is the upward-breath, that is the Great Breath, that is the radiant Ether. Therefore, let him reverence it as divine power and might. Possessed of divine power and might he becomes, who knows thus.

They, verily, these five Brahma-spirits are the doorkeepers of the heavenly world. He who knows thus these five Brahma-spirits as doorkeepers of the heavenly world, in his family a hero is born. He gains the heavenly world who knows thus these five Brahma-spirits as doorkeepers of the heavenly world.

And so the light which shines beyond this heaven, at the back of the whole world, at the back of all that is, in the supreme realms than which none is higher, that, verily, is the same as this light in the man within. This is the seeing of it, when through contact in this body he discerns its enkindling. This is the hearing of it, when, closing the two ears, he hears inwardly a rumbling, a lowing, the sound of a blazing fire. Therefore, let him reverence that as seen and heard. Worthy to be seen and heard he becomes, who knows thus,—who knows thus.

All this, verily, is the Eternal. Having attained to peace, let him reverence it as That from which all comes forth, That in which all is dissolved, That in which all breathes. And so, of a truth, man is formed of Will. According as a man's will is in this world, such on going forth from this world he becomes. So let him direct his will.

Made of mind, with the life-breaths as body, radiant-formed, whose imagination is true, whose self is radiant Ether, possessing all works, possessing all desires, possessing all fragrances, possessing all essences, encompassing

all this world, unspeaking, unconcerned,—this is my divine Self in the inner Heart, smaller than a grain of rice, or a grain of barley, or a grain of mustard-seed, or a grain of millet, or the kernel of a grain of millet,—this is my divine Self in the inner Heart, older and mightier than the earth, older and mightier than the mid-world, older and mightier than the heavens, older and mightier than these worlds.

Possessing all works, possessing all desires, possessing all fragrances, possessing all essences, encompassing all this world, unspeaking, unconcerned,—this is my divine Self in the inner Heart, this is the Eternal. In that divine Self I shall completely come to birth on going forth from this world. Whose this truly is, can doubt no more. Thus of old spoke Shandilya, thus spoke Shandilya.

The treasure-house containing the mid-world, with the earth as its floor, grows not old. Its corners are the four directions of space. The sky is its opening above. This treasure-house is the container of riches. In it rests all that is.

Its eastern quarter is named the sacrificial ladle. Its southern quarter is named the overcoming. Its western quarter is named the queen. Its northern quarter is named well-endowed. Of these quarters the Great Breath is the offspring. He who knows thus the Great Breath as the offspring, laments not with the lamentation for a son.

"So I know thus the Great Breath as the offspring of the quarters. Let me not lament with the lamentation for a son.

"In this invincible treasure-house I take refuge, through that, through that, through that.

"In the Life-breath I take refuge, through that, through that, through that.

"In this world I take refuge, through that, through that, through that.

"In the mid-world I take refuge, through that, through that, through that.

"In the heavenly world I take refuge, through that, through that, through that."

When I said, "In the Life-breath I take refuge," the Life-breath, verily is all here that has come into being, whatsoever there is; in that, verily, I have taken refuge.

And so, when I said, "In this world I take refuge," this I said: "In the earth I take refuge, in the interspace I take refuge, in the sky I take refuge."

And so, when I said, "In the mid-world I take refuge," this I said: "In the Fire-lord I take refuge, in the Great Breath I take refuge, in the Sun I take refuge."

And so, when I said, "In the heavenly world I take refuge," this I said: "In the Rig Veda I take refuge, in the Yajur Veda I take refuge, in the Sama Veda I take refuge."

Man, verily, is sacrifice. Of him, four-and-twenty years are the morning oblation. For the Gayatri measure has four-and-twenty syllables, and with

the Gayatri is celebrated the morning oblation. With this oblation the Bright Powers called the Vasus are correlated. The life-breaths, verily, are the Vasus, for they uphold all that is here.

Should anything afflict him in this division of life, let him say: "Ye life-breaths, ye Vasus, let this morning oblation of mine be continued until the midday oblation. May I, the sacrifice, not be cut off in the midst of the life-breaths, of the Vasus!" He arises thence, he is freed from ill.

Then of him four-and-forty years are the midday oblation. For the Trishtubh measure has four-and-forty syllables, and with the Trishtubh the midday oblation is offered. With this oblation the Bright Powers called the Rudras are correlated. The life-breaths, verily, are the Rudras, for they bring lamentation to all that is here.

Should anything afflict him in this division of life, let him say: "Ye life-breaths, ye Rudras, let this midday oblation of mine be continued until the third libation. May I, the sacrifice, not be cut off in the midst of the life-breaths, of the Rudras!" He arises thence, he is freed from ill.

Then of him eight-and-forty years are the third oblation. For the Jagati measure has eight-and-forty syllables, and with the Jagati the third oblation is offered. With this oblation the Bright Powers called Sons of the Sun are correlated. The life-breaths, verily are the Sons of the Sun, for they take all that is here.

Should anything afflict him in this division of life, let him say: "Ye life-breaths, Sons of the Sun, let this third oblation of mine be continued to the full life-span. May I, the sacrifice, not be cut off in the midst of the life-breaths, Sons of the Sun!" He arises thence, he is freed from ill.

Knowing this in the olden times Mahidasa Aitareya said: "So why dost thou afflict me, since I shall not go forth because of this!"

He lived a hundred and sixteen years. He lives a hundred and sixteen years, who knows thus.

Mind, verily, as the Eternal let him reverence: thus with regard to the Self. And so with regard to the Divinities, radiant Ether is the Eternal. This is the twofold instruction, with regard to the Self and to the Divinities.

That, the Eternal, has four parts: voice is a part, life-breath is a part, seeing is a part, hearing is a part; thus with regard to the Self. And so with regard to the Divinities: Fire-lord is a part, Great Breath is a part, Sun is a part, the Spaces are a part. This, verily, is the twofold instruction, with regard to the Self and to the Divinities.

Voice, verily, is a fourth part of the Eternal; this through the Fire-lord as its light gleams and glows; he gleams and glows with glory, with splendour, with holy fire, who knows thus.

Life-breath, verily, is a fourth part of the Eternal; this through the Great Breath as its light gleams and glows; he gleams and glows with glory, with splendour, with the holy fire, who knows thus.

Seeing, verily, is a fourth part of the Eternal; this through the Sun as its

light gleams and glows; he gleams and glows with glory, with splendour, with holy fire, who knows thus.

Hearing, verily, is a fourth part of the Eternal; this through the Spaces as its light gleams and glows: he gleams and glows with glory, with splendour, with holy fire, who knows thus.

The Solar Lord, verily, is the Eternal: this is the instruction. Its expansion is this:

Non-existence, verily, was this world in the beginning. It became existence; it came to birth; it took the form of the Egg; it lay quiescent for the measure of an æon; it was parted in twain; these two parts of the shell were the one silver, the other golden.

The half which was silver, that is this Earth; the half which was golden, that is the Heavens; what was the Chorion, that became the mountains; what was the Amnion, that became cloud and mist; what were the veins, these became the rivers; what was the liquid contained within, that became the ocean.

And so, that which came to birth is that Sun. Toward that, thus coming to birth, a great sound of triumphant song, all beings and all desires arose. Therefore, at the Sun's rising, at every return, a great sound of triumphant song, all beings and all desires arise.

He who, thus knowing this, reverences the Sun as the Eternal, there is the hope that to him will come a great sound of rejoicing, filling him with joy, filling him with joy.

C. J.

Never take too large a place in what you do. God has the right not to be altogether forgotten in every one of our deeds.—PLUS.

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

THE Student seemed worried. "What has become of our unexpected Visitor of the last 'Screen'?" he asked. "I was afraid she might have read your description of her as an 'awful Accident', and have been offended."

"Not a chance in the world", the Recorder replied. "She never reads. She said so, and that she prefers to 'pick up' information by asking questions, such as those she asked you. Probably, by now, she has floated into an enthusiasm for Dutch art or for Bahaism."

"No", said the Historian, "the Student impressed her greatly. I heard of her a few days ago. She had been to a tea party, and had announced that obviously he was a reincarnation of St. John; that the Philosopher had been Dante, and the rest of us on the same scale. She knew all this because, as she said, she had been Marie Antoinette! Poor little elemental!"

"Poor little nothing", the Philosopher exclaimed indignantly; "we are the people to be commiserated, though it is the Work that really suffers. Just as likely as not, she will be saying in a week or two that *we* told her about our past incarnations, but, if she prefers to keep the credit of her absurd 'discoveries', those to whom she 'reveals' them will undoubtedly infer the same thing, and that we must be idiots and worse to have stuffed her thistle-down head with such nonsense."

"Curious how every worth-while movement attracts that sort of pest", the Engineer commented. "They are not wicked,—just silly. There were plenty of them in H. P. B.'s time; and I have known Judge to hide from them. A strong light in darkness attracts moths, and I suppose Theosophy fascinates such people on the same principle. Then, following the bent of their own natures, they select the unimportant, the personal, the trifling, from the great body of truth they encounter, and pass these around as a child holds up a new toy for the admiration and envy of other children. Sometimes it's astrology, sometimes the Tarot cards; more often, the most ordinary kind of gossip about the ways and doings of mutual acquaintances,—the sort of thing you meet with wherever common people forgather. And the one sin for which even the newest student of Theosophy cannot be pardoned, is to be common. It is not a matter of birth or education. I have known peasants, mechanics, all over the world, sailors before the mast, whose outlook on life was noble, and whose unassuming dignity—the fruit of thought rather than of reading—would have served as a model for any of us. A man who really loves his work, that is to say, who treats it as something sacred, instead of as an excuse for chatter or complaint, has passed beyond the stage of having a common mind, —and it is of course a common mind that explains cheap interests and cheap talk."

"I am glad you spoke of that", remarked the Philosopher. "I have been reading *The Art of Thinking*, by Ernest Dimnet. Strange as it may seem, it has become a 'best seller',—strange, both because of its title and its contents, seeing that a 'best seller' usually is trash, and Dimnet's book is intended to make people think, and can hardly fail to do so. However, the point is that he suggests several admirable tests of the level of our habitual thinking. For instance: 'If, at any moment, you are unable to name a great man who is, or has recently been, having an influence on your conduct, you will be passing the verdict, *ordinary*, on the quality of your own thought and existence.' He says, speaking of Clemenceau, 'open his little book on Demosthenes and you will see and positively touch as with your own hand the effect of a constant preference for great patriots and great thinkers in an existence which journalism, politics, duelling and all the empty effervescence of the Forum might otherwise have made shallow.' Here, you will notice, Dimnet uses the word 'shallow' as practically synonymous with 'ordinary'. Another way of expressing the same idea would be, that the life's output of many men and women, mentally and conversationally, must be indistinguishable, on the spiritual plane, from a many times repeated Tat-tat-ta, Tat-tat-ta, Tat-tat-ta, to be carried on just the same after death, except, perhaps, that they'd save time by dropping the ta after the Tat. Certainly every one of us ought to challenge himself under this head, to discover in what directions we can raise the level of our 'between-whiles' thinking, and get rid for ever of some habits of thought and talk which are, to put it mildly, very ordinary".

"I believe", said the Ancient at this point, "that some students of Theosophy, when applying Dimnet's test to themselves, would feel that they are constantly influenced by the thought of the Masters; and doubtless they are, though perhaps 'often' would be more accurate than 'constantly'. Masters, however, are like the sun in the heavens,—a blaze of light; and nature has provided us with moon and stars also, that, when the sun disappears from our vision, we may still look up and adore. It is not healthy, for the average man, to think exclusively of Masters. For one thing, he may begin to imagine that there are only two kinds of people, men like himself, and Masters,—the fact being that history and literature are full of characters whose superiority to ourselves it should be one of our greatest delights to recognize, not simply in a general off-hand sort of way, as one admits that Asia has more inhabitants than America, but in detail and by name. All of us should have our private gallery of heroes,—men and women who, though far from being suns, have reflected something of the sun's glory, and by so doing have brought it more nearly within the range of our comprehension. The contemplation of greatness tends to arouse the elements of greatness which lie latent within us. Love is creative, and to love nobility, as we see it revealed in the life and purpose of others, dead or living, is to create their spirit in our hearts.

"People find excuses readily for falling short of the standards of Masters. 'I'm no Mahatma!' they will say to themselves, with a glow of modesty. It is not so easy, however, to find a valid reason for having less self-control

than a man like Faraday. The son of a blacksmith and apprentice to a bookbinder, Professor Tyndall said of him that he had an excitable and fiery nature, but, 'through high self-discipline, had converted the fire into a central glow and motive power of life, instead of permitting it to waste itself in useless passion': and Faraday had no incentive, such as we have, for his achievement, —no understanding of Kama as a reflection of Buddhi, no knowledge of spiritual transmutation, no desire for discipleship. Do any of us accept ill-health as a handicap? It were surely wise, in that case, if we cannot hope to emulate the heroism of H. P. B., to remember what Darwin wrote to a friend: 'If I had not been so great an invalid, I should not have done nearly so much work as I have been able to accomplish.' Plutarch's *Lives* and *Parallel Lives* were once the companions of all educated men, not because the characters he portrays are always worthy of emulation, but because Plutarch's own standards are invariably above the ordinary, while his criticism is shrewd, and his narrative, intensely interesting. Every student of Theosophy should keep the *Lives* fresh in his mind as part of his moral background.

"Partly, perhaps, because I am so painfully conscious of failure to use my opportunities as I might and should have done, I confess an intense ambition for members of The Theosophical Society. I want them to be distinguished everywhere by charm of manner, kindliness, evenness of temper, poise, good judgment; I want them to be recognized for their unconscious distinction, the result of lofty and detached thinking, with the purposes of Masters their centre of interest, not themselves; I want them to be able to handle affairs of the world with skill but with unconcern, as angels might swiftly and thoroughly clean a room,—and disappear. I do not want them to be cranks, or fanatics, or sentimentalists, or to drag Theosophy into their conversation when it is not wanted, or for the purpose of dragging themselves into the lime-light; I do not want them to adopt an attitude of superiority to their neighbours, or to the ideas of their neighbours. Yet they should remember that the only way to impress the world is to be above the world (can a seal impress wax otherwise?), while never forgetting that the world, in these matters, is not easily deceived, and that the attempt to appear superior will at once be recognized for what it is: proof of inferiority. Slow to take offence, gentle in speech, restrained in laughter, incapable of mere chatter, they will be worthy of respect and will win it.

"I must seem to be preaching, but heaven knows I am trying to take it to heart. If one thing is certain, it is that words unsupported by honest effort, not only count for nothing, but are harmful.

"It was said of Kitchener that he based his plans on the consideration of remote as well as immediate consequences; that he always looked beyond his own life-time for results; and that this habit accounted in part for the impression he gave of aloofness, and for the inability of most men who came into personal contact with him, to understand his mental processes. Consciously, or not, he was inclined to test all things by the perpetual question of the boy-saint: 'How does this look in the light of eternity?' Would not

the same attitude toward our own thoughts—and of course our words and acts—go far toward saving us from being wrapt up in personal and ephemeral concerns, and thus, from 'the greater condemnation' of being common?"

"Your reference to H. P. B. reminds me", remarked the Student, "that one of our editors handed me a copy of *The Real H. P. Blavatsky*, by William Kingsland, published by John M. Watkins in London, asking me to review it for the next issue of the QUARTERLY. I have not been able to do so, or even to read it through consecutively; but I think that our readers should be informed of its publication without further delay, as it is certainly the best and most complete book written about her so far. It is not perfect of course, but the author has honestly done his best to present the facts as he sees them. In an appendix he gives a critical analysis of the 1885 Report of the Society for Psychical Research,—the famous, or, rather, infamous Hodgson report. All the available sources are drawn upon in the account of H. P. B.'s life, the author deserving the highest praise for what was undoubtedly a labour of love. I regret that he did not confine himself to his subject, for his references to the Theosophical Movement and to Theosophy, show great lack of understanding. He speaks of 'the stupendous disaster of the Great War', and adds: 'If the Theosophical Society had succeeded in its original intention, if it had become a living example of Universal Brotherhood [it has], the teachings of Theosophy in their scientific, philosophical, and spiritual aspects would doubtless have obtained a world-wide recognition and acceptance [this is nonsense: Theosophy is for the few] such as would have made the Great War an impossibility.' Nonsense piled on nonsense! It sounds as if he were a Pacifist, and it also sounds as if he believed, as the leaders of the so-called 'Back-to-Blavatsky' movement believe, that the Masters failed in their work through H. P. B., and that the Society which they founded, no longer represents them. He should read the QUARTERLY, and our Convention reports!"

"Possibly", the Philosopher interjected, "if he were to read the Convention reports, he would be more convinced than ever that he is right, because it is obvious, from the extract you have read, that our attitude toward the Great War is the antithesis of his. My own belief is that it was the force liberated at our Conventions which led this country into the war. In any case, how anyone with the least understanding of H. P. B. can doubt what *her* attitude would have been, passes all comprehension. She, who was wounded nearly to death at the battle of Mentana in 1867; who was a warrior if ever there was one, would have been like a lion let loose on behalf of the Allies."

"Of course", the Ancient agreed. "Further, if the teachings of Theosophy had gained universal acceptance in this country, we should have been in the war as soon as Germany invaded Belgium, instead of trying to play both ways until 1917.

"Apart, however, from Mr. Kingsland's obvious misunderstanding of basic Theosophical principles, his criticism of the Society is vitiated by the fact

that, like most English people, he thinks of Mrs. Besant's Adyar society as representing, at least outwardly, the work of H. P. B., forgetting that The Theosophical Society was founded in New York, was maintained there by W. Q. Judge with her repeated approval, and has been conducted on the same lines to this day by those who were 'brought up', theosophically, by Judge, to carry out the purposes of the Founders. In other words, Mr. Kingsland knows nothing of the real Society. He has been misled by the noise and clap-trap of those whose chief aim for many years seems to have been to astonish their followers, and to keep their own names before the public. In this they have certainly succeeded,—at the cost of prostituting the name, Theosophy. Meanwhile, so quietly that it has not even advertised its public meetings, the original Society has steadily pursued its way, true to its Founders, forming year by year, by a long process of Karmic selection, that 'nucleus of a universal brotherhood of humanity,' which the Masters, from the beginning, declared it was their purpose to establish: a nucleus of people who know, no matter what their shortcomings, that one might have all the psychic powers in creation, without being a Theosophist, and that moral and spiritual likeness to the Masters is the only true test either of progress or of service. Is there a member in our ranks who has desired or has sought, public recognition? If so, he forms no part of our 'nucleus'. Is there a member anywhere who has lived on his work for the Society, by emoluments drawn directly or indirectly for his services? Not one. No contributor, or worker for the QUARTERLY, has ever been paid one cent for his labours; all money derived from the sale of our books has been turned back into the work. Like Paul the tent-maker, the poorest among those who have given their time and energies to the Society, have supported themselves meanwhile by their own trade, business, or profession. This does not make for charlatanism or insincerity. Can any other society, calling itself theosophical, say as much? This is an open challenge.

"My observation has been that financial dependence upon religious, philanthropic, benevolent or patriotic activities, is utterly demoralizing, and that the effect is worse, if that were possible, when so vital a cause as that of Theosophy is involved. One reason for this, out of many, is that, in most cases, all such work begins as a self-indulgence. It is easier to see it in those terms when a young man, the son of poor parents, decides to give his life to art. His father's little store—let us suppose—does not attract him. No; he prefers to go to Paris to become a 'creator of values': an artist who will uplift the standards of the world. Perhaps he allows his parents to skimp and save for his benefit; perhaps he finds some local backer, willing to 'stake' him. In any case he chooses the path of least (inner) resistance,—the path that seems most pleasant, rather than the path of hard labour and of duty. What wonder that, arrived in Paris, self-indulgence does not cease,—though it may take other forms! The boy has made himself a parasite. If he had stayed at home, honestly working in his father's store, studying and practising his art during spare moments and on holidays, he would at least have

learned whether his 'vocation' were real or fictitious. No power on earth can stifle a real vocation. Byron would have written poetry, perhaps better than he actually wrote, if, like Spinoza, he had earned his living making lenses; Fra Angelico would have painted, if, instead of being a Dominican Friar, he had been, like Byron, heir to an English title, or, like Böhme, had followed the trade of a shoemaker. Nothing in the universe can keep us from serving the cause of Theosophy, or The Theosophical Society, if we have a genuine desire to serve them,—neither poverty nor wealth, neither sickness nor sorrow. Every act we perform, every pain we endure, every thought we think, can be turned into service of that cause; and not only into service, but into an ability to serve more perfectly,—into Adeptship of service. There are opportunities at every moment."

"Yes", said the Student; "there are opportunities at every moment, in every direction. Yet I have heard members say, occasionally, 'There is nothing I can do to help', or, 'I have tried, and it's no use; I am always criticized: nothing I do is ever right.' Well,—some people have a genius for lying down half way; others, an inability to see that their past performance might be improved upon, while all of us, without exception, in a certain part of our nature, harbour a resentment against being called upon to do anything at all. Is not *tamas*, as well as *rajas*, a common inheritance of the race?"

Then he quoted:

" 'I wish I was a little rock,
A sittin' on a hill,
A doin' nuthin' all day long
But jist a sittin' still.
I wouldn't walk, I wouldn't move,
I wouldn't even wash.
I'd jist sit down a thousand years,
And rest myself, by Gosh.'

"It's all very well to laugh", he continued, "but that is one of the secret prayers of most of us, and accounts for a good deal of the supposed inability to be of service to the Society.

"Naturally, not all of us can serve in the same way. Not every one is able to speak or to write. Yet there are those who could write, who are too lazy to learn: they simply will not take the necessary *pains*. Do they suppose that those who now contribute to the QUARTERLY, were born with some peculiar gift? In my opinion, one must learn how to think before one can learn how to write; consequently, no one ever learns to write at school or college: the art of thinking is not a 'required' course. It must be acquired, if at all, later in life,—and only as the result of prolonged effort, of repeated but profitable failure, of keen desire to learn, of real self-sacrifice. After thirty or more years of practice, we begin to realize how poor our performance

is, even though it may be 'acceptable'. Still, to write acceptably, makes it possible to serve.

"Even so, one is met with the rejoinder, 'I have nothing to write about.' And at that point I begin to lose patience. If you *think* Theosophy, all you need do, to find a burning topic, is to walk down the main street of your town, or, if you cannot walk, read the morning paper. The world is alive with topics. Every magazine you pick up, is a challenge to your Theosophy, sometimes by way of contrast, sometimes by direct contribution. For instance, a friend gave me a copy of *The Yale Review* (Winter, 1929). Glancing at it, I found an article, 'The Real Scholar Gipsy', dealing with the life, character, and doings of the younger Van Helmont. The writer of the article, Marjorie Nicolson, says of him: 'There was not in Europe a more romantic figure, nor one about whom more traditions clustered. The essence of his attraction lay in his mystery. He had dabbled in chemistry, and was learned in esoteric knowledge; he had fought in battles, and beaten his way through outraged mobs that clamoured for his life; it was whispered that the mantle of his magical father had fallen upon his shoulders.' Impossible to read it without a desire to learn more about him. Was he, or was he not, an Occultist? He was a friend of Henry More, the Cambridge Platonist; he was closely associated with the early Quakers—George Fox, William Penn, Lady Conway and others; he knew half the Princes of Europe. Even from this brief article, it is evident that he knew a great deal about the power of the imagination, the preliminary key to all occult forces. He applied it in his practice of medicine. His theory of pain gave him an experience which Christian saints and Bhakti yogis would understand, but which he produced deliberately and scientifically. He was suffering agonies from a broken shoulder, which doctors had tried to set and had made worse. He used his pain to demonstrate the truth of his belief that man's imagination and will are supreme over his material trials. When he determined, he says, that the excruciating pain in his shoulder was 'nothing less but my owne life, excited or inflamed for my good . . . I began to love my pain'; upon which the writer of the article comments with unusual insight: '*Love*, be it noticed; not merely *disregard*, or *tolerate;* he was no trimmer, this mighty hunter before the Lord!'

"However, all that I am suggesting is,—an article for the QUARTERLY; a ready-made and 'new' subject; an intensely interesting field for further investigation. 'Nothing to write about'! There are so many things to write about that ten lifetimes would not cover them.

"Here is another instance: a book catalogue with some cheap 'remnants'; among them, one entitled *Fra Paolo Sarpi: The Greatest of the Venetians*, by the Rev. Alexander Robertson, published years ago by Sampson Low. Mortified to realize that if I had ever so much as heard of this 'greatest of the Venetians', I had forgotten all about him, the next step was to buy the book, quite prepared to find that it would be waste of time to read it. Instead, it proved to be fascinating,—and yet another field for Theosophical investiga-

tion, yet another opportunity for a QUARTERLY article. Fra Paolo was born in 1552 and died in 1623; he was recognized universally as by far the greatest scholar of his century,—the greatest of its mathematicians, anatomists (he discovered the valves of the veins), theologians. With Galileo he invented the thermometer; he made profound studies of sound and colour, of pneumatics, hydrostatics, metallurgy, chemistry; he was the leader of his period in all these and in many other directions. Above all, he practically governed Venice, and, while a member of a religious Order, fought the Pope to a standstill, carrying his country successfully through a period of national excommunication, and forcing the Pope, finally, to bless officially what he had cursed officially. Paul V, the Pope in question, did his utmost, time after time, to have Paolo murdered, and once nearly succeeded; but the Friar politely, resolutely defied him, and won his battle by sheer weight of intellect, integrity, and saintliness.

"He was a reformer *within* the Church,—a reformer of such extraordinary gifts that they appear to have been superhuman. Now it seems to me to be common sense that the Master in whose name the Christian Church exists (he did not found it, any more than Gautama founded the Buddhist Churches which have grown up in his name), must have tried often to bring it more nearly into line with his spirit and purposes, and that he must have wished to reform it from within, rather than divide it into sects. The Pontificate of Paul V (Camillo Borghese) was as bad as that of Paul III (Farnese). This meant, not only need, but opportunity. Further, the Society of Jesus, although of recent origin, had already become political rather than religious, and had adopted such evil ways that Father Bobadilla, one of its founders, confessed to Fra Paolo that, 'It never entered the mind of Father Ignatius Loyola that the Company should become what it now was', and that 'if he returned again to the earth he would not recognize it as his own'. In brief, the Church of Rome could hardly have been in a worse condition. Question: was Fra Paolo a chêla of the Christian Master, specially incarnated to lead, as he did, the movement tending to limit the power of the Popes, and to prevent their interference in the civil affairs of nations, while doing what little he could to revive a belief in primitive and 'unclericalized' Christianity? Surely worth investigating,—and writing about!"

"Do you suggest that Fra Paolo may have been a chêla consciously?" the Historian asked.

"No", the Student answered. "My understanding is that, in such a case, the chêla would have to leave behind him, as part of the sacrifice involved, what I have heard described as 'his occultism'. The Karma of the Church, and, in this case, the Karma of Italy, would not have permitted the incarnation of a *conscious* occultist to do public work. It is clear to me, also, that if a chêla were given the mission which I am attributing, tentatively, to Fra Paolo, too much knowledge would have been as great a hindrance as too little. He was called by the most learned of his contemporaries, 'the oracle of his age'; but this in itself proves that he was within the reach of their

appreciation,—not beyond it, as a chêla, aware of his chêlaship, would have been."

The Ancient had been listening with evident interest, and yet seemed glad when a pause gave him an opportunity to speak. "I am in complete sympathy with your position", he said, addressing the Student. "The opportunities for service, both inner and outer, are endless. For any member of the Society to pretend otherwise, shows an entire failure to understand the elements of Theosophy. Yet, human nature being what it is, there is almost always a tendency, as I am sure you will agree, to think of outer work as an excuse for some slackening of inner effort; and the supreme need, now and always, necessarily must be self-understanding, self-conquest, Self-realization. For one thing, no article for the QUARTERLY is worth the paper it is written on unless based upon that foundation. Tremendous efforts are being made by the Lodge to counteract the stupefying effects of scientific progress,—stupefying, because all that science is doing is to dig deeper and deeper into matter, burying its own head in the sand like an ostrich, and dragging the attention of the world with it. The mere sublimation, or rarefaction, of the 'matter' with which science now deals, in comparison with the 'matter' of 1875, does not affect the situation in the least. The man who thinks all day long of *pâté de foie gras* or of lobster à la Newburg, is no better off, spiritually, than a man who thinks all day long of corned beef and cabbage.

"All of us must realize that the Great War was an outer manifestation of a crisis in the still greater war that is perpetually being fought for the souls of men,—the White Lodge against the Black. The outer war ended, superficially, in a victory for the Allies; but every intelligent person now realizes that the Allies, by their failure to stand on principle, and by their policy of expediency, gave away the fruits of victory from the day of the Armistice, and have done so increasingly ever since. They won the War but lost the Peace. Looking, however, still further beneath the surface of events, it becomes evident, as the QUARTERLY has persistently maintained, that the real outcome is still undetermined; for the White Lodge executed a vast flanking movement against the Black, by turning one of the achievements of the Black into a weapon against them. The flower of England, France, Belgium, gone, it was said, and said truly; many thousands of promising young Americans too. I have forgotten the exact numbers, but more than two million dead, including many of the best and bravest. Individually, they had died at the crest of their wave, so to speak; they had died in a fervour of service, of self-abandonment. Yet most of them had died young, with their normal life-span unfulfilled. Think! In one sense they would be 'earth-bound', though, for their sacrifice, entitled to 'heaven'. What kind of heaven would satisfy them, except one compact of the spirit in which they died,—a heaven of service; and, at first, for most of them, earthly service. 'Deprive the world of its best', one can imagine to have been part of the aim of the Black Lodge. The White Lodge, turning defeat into victory, meets this evil by using the world's best for the world's salvation,—aiding and guiding and

organizing this great army of the dead, for the service it craves and must have. In a thousand ways it 'breaks through'. Read an article in the March number of *The American Magazine*, entitled 'Seven Minutes in Eternity—the Amazing Experience that Made Me Over'—an article typical of many that have been contributed to 'popular' magazines in recent years—and, assuming its truth, you will find an indication of how the dead may be winning the war which the living lost. You may object, if you read the article, that the utmost its author obtained was first-hand experience of a lower plane of the astral world. Even so, it changed his life, spiritually. Further, it was the sort of experience that readers of popular magazines can understand, while a higher type of experience, say of a St. Catherine of Sienna or of a St. Teresa of Avila, would leave them unimpressed and cold.

"Now for my point: the writer of that article, he says, has learned as a certainty that he is a spiritual entity; that there is no death, and that 'there is a world of subliminal or spiritual existence, interpenetrating the ordinary world in which most of us exist . . . and that this subliminal world is the real world.' He has learned by abnormal means that which every student of Theosophy should have learned by normal means. Because he has learned it, for so long as he remains true to his Light, he will carry his message with him wherever he goes, not by speech, but by reason of what he *knows*. Speech without knowledge is 'as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal'. We must *know* these things if we would convey them. It is nothing short of a tragedy when a student of Theosophy, because he has read about these things and believes them, spends the rest of his life talking about them instead of becoming them. He says he believes he is a spiritual being. Very good; but are his interests spiritual, or mental and worldly?—for that alone is the test of the faith that is really in him,—not what he thinks he believes; still less, what he says he believes. And knowledge comes to those who hunger for it. To quote once more from 'Seven Minutes in Eternity' (though I do not want to exaggerate the importance of that particular article: it is, as I said, merely typical of many): 'I believe my subconscious hunger after what the Bible terms "the things of the Spirit"—that is, the sincere desire to penetrate behind the mediocrity of three-meals-a-day living, and ascertain what mystery lies behind this Golgotha of Existence—attracted to me spiritual forces of a very high and altruistic order, who aided me in making a hyperdimensional visitation. I believe such hunger will always attract such forces.' Of course it will. We find what we seek, as Emerson said. If we seek psychic experience, we shall find that, and the denizens of the astral world—good or bad, according to our own nature—will crowd to aid us. If we seek spiritual experience, we shall find that, and, again, the denizens of the spiritual world will ceaselessly teach and sustain us, revealing reality to us by every means in their power, first in one direction and then in another, until they have led us to 'the place of the lifting of the veil', where we know ourselves for what we are, and may 'behold the King in His glory.'

"Prayers alone are not enough. No one, wishing to build a house, would

think it sufficient to pray that the house might just 'happen'. Time enough to pray when he has made a clear-cut picture in his mind of the kind of house he wants to build. Even then, he must put his plans on paper; must remove the rubbish from his site; must dig foundations; must pile brick on brick and stone on stone,—praying constantly meanwhile for strength and perseverance, but *working, working*, and of course obtaining all the advice and help he can from those who have built houses for themselves before him. Perhaps a better analogy would be the building of a Church or Temple, because that would, or should, eliminate the possibility of selfish motive, and suggest, furthermore, that divine guidance should be sought at every step of the way. Whether house or Temple, however, it is evident that he will never succeed unless he create a picture of a finished product which appeals to him as attractive. He must see something in his mind's eye which he personally and genuinely desires to make real. Otherwise he will lack enthusiasm, will lack *love:* and—must fail. But the old saying that appetite comes from eating, is as true of the spiritual world as it is of the physical. We can cultivate love just as we can cultivate an appetite or a taste,—a taste, let us say, for good instead of for trashy reading. In that case, we use our wills to make ourselves read the better sort of books, at first against the grain of our inclination, but very soon in line with it. In exactly the same way, we can cultivate a hunger for discipleship, for chêlaship, for the service of Masters, for knowledge of the real. 'Do the deed and you shall have the power.' Be a disciple for five minutes, and you will want to be a better disciple for ten; and if anyone says, 'But I'm not a disciple; I'm full of faults and weaknesses and sins; how can I pretend to be that which I know I am not?' my answer is: pretend often enough, and you will turn yourself into the thing you were not. Naturally I am not speaking of pretence in the eyes of others, or for their benefit: that sort of pretence is an abomination. I am saying that if a man knows he is selfish, he can make himself unselfish by forcing himself repeatedly to do unselfish things, for he will develop before long a preference for that sort of behaviour, and finally—unless he perpetually pats himself on the back for his 'sacrifices'—finally, he will achieve a change of heart which will make unselfishness spontaneous and *unconscious;* for very clearly, no man who is conscious of his qualities, as yet possesses them,—until he reaches the further stage of looking down upon them, rather as we look upon the rind of an orange.

"Knowledge is obtainable. Certainty can be gained. It is our own fault if we remain in darkness. It is worse than a fault, it is a sin, if we remain content with mental beliefs and shibboleths. Everyone of us ought to ask himself honestly, What do I *know?*—remembering always that the test of knowledge is instinctive action; remembering also that it is the everlasting desire of Masters to share with us the certainties of their experience and Being."

T.

REVIEWS

The Roman Catholic Church in the Modern State, by Charles C. Marshall; Dodd, Mead and Company, 1928; price $3.00.

Students of Madame Blavatsky's efforts to break down the dogmatism, spiritual pride and self-sufficiency of Ecclesiasticism, will find this book exceedingly useful. So much Theosophic leaven has entered Western Christianity since her labours in that direction began with the second volume of *Isis*, that in Protestantism, where freedom of thought was, at least in principle, a possibility, there has been genuine and encouraging progress towards tolerance, with the acceptance of far wider views of Christianity, and of other religions as well. It is true, too often, unfortunately, that what Protestantism has gained in breadth it has lost in depth and in fervour, the result being a shallowness both of thought and of devotion that in many cases is pitiable. The Church of Rome, on the other hand, while it still produces saints, has maintained officially and steadfastly the traditional attitude, resisting for the most part that which is good in the intellectual spirit of the times, and actually entrenching itself still further in the prescriptive moulds by reason of this very resistance. Because individual members of that Church often adopt a liberal and friendly attitude, the ordinary man has been led to believe that this probably reflected an increasing official liberality; but such is not the case. It will come as a surprise, doubtless, to many readers of this book—as it did to the reviewer—to discover how far the Church of Rome has actually gone in arrogating to itself, and to the Pope, all authority, wisdom and power. No Lodge of Masters training disciples in the ascending degrees of chêlaship; no generalissimo of an army in a beleaguered city, has claimed, and, where possible, enforced, such a right to blind obedience or such a monopoly of the truth. These claims are set forth in the more recent official Constitution, Syllabi, and Encyclical Letters of the Roman Curia, made accessible in translation; and they scarcely need either comment or analysis. Read however dispassionately, they form a remarkable indictment of any Priesthood claiming infallible Divine guidance and inspiration.

The author is primarily concerned with the superiority of Democracy, and the will of the people, as an off-set to Roman Hierarchical Authority; but the student of Theosophy may reflect upon both attitudes—set forth temperately, justly, and with dignity in this book—and derive therefrom a truer appreciation of the ideals given us by the Maha-Chohan himself:—"... an open mind, ... an eager intellect, an unveiled spiritual perception, a readiness to give and to receive advice and instruction, ... a loyal obedience to the behests of Truth". Because of the recent political campaign in the United States, the suppression in France of *Le Sillon* and *L'Action Française*, the Encyclical Letter issued January sixth, 1928, and the reconciliation of Church and State in Italy,—the attention of thinking people is turned towards the "Roman Question"; and members of the Society may wish to become better equipped to discuss the subjects involved by a first-hand acquaintance with the facts and documents, studied anew in the light of their knowledge of Theosophy.

A. G.

The Delphic Maxims in Literature, by Eliza Gregory Wilkins; The University of Chicago Press, 1929; price, $3.00.

On the temple of Apollo at Delphi there were inscribed three maxims: "Know thyself",

"Nothing too much", "Give a pledge, or give security, and trouble is at hand." The author has brought together in this one book all of consequence that has been written about these Delphic Maxims from their first appearance in literature until the present time. The book shows the probable original meaning of each maxim in the light of Greek literature itself, and man's perennial interest in them which is still unabated. The sayings began to appear in extant Greek literature sometime during the latter half of the sixth century B.C., and the first two recur frequently in the extant literature of the Greeks and Romans. There are fewer discussions of them between A.D. 500 and A.D. 1500; but with the coming of the Renaissance Miss Wilkins finds them returning with a force that has continued down to our own day. Her history of these maxims through the ages leads not only into literature of almost every type, but into some touch with the thought movements which have characterized each period in the development of mankind.

The book contains reproductions of some rare old prints. It is admirably printed on unusually good paper. Readers of the QUARTERLY will find it of real value. It is surprising, however, that the author, so widely read, should not have taken advantage of the light thrown by H. P. Blavatsky upon the significance of the first of the Delphic maxims, and that she does not appear to be acquainted, even, with the Cambridge Platonists, or with the innumerable studies of the Hermetic philosophy which the writings of Madame Blavatsky called forth, and which have been published during the past fifty years.

B.

A Life of Cardinal Mercier, by Monsignor A. Laveille; translated by Arthur Livingstone; The Century Co., New York, 1928; price $2.50.

Monsignor Laveille, who is Vicar-General of Meaux, and a compatriot of Cardinal Mercier, has given us in his book a warm and intimate picture of the man whom Marshal Foch called the "outstanding figure of our time;" and he has succeeded in doing two special things with admirable skill. He has shown us first, that the dominant militant note which, in later life, won for the great Churchman the title of "The fighting Cardinal", was already evident in the character of the boy, and that this instinct for a bold attack of every difficulty is traceable from the time when, as a young student at the Academy of St. Rombaut in Malines, he had his own way to make, up through the years of fierce struggle for the revival of Thomist thought and the foundation of the Institute of Philosophy at Louvain; again in meeting the prejudices which were rife, and the failures which tested his mettle in connection with the Seminary of Leo XIII. "To head frontwards" was one of Cardinal Mercier's favourite expressions, and he never failed to be true to its spirit. As a second point, Monsignor Laveille throws into high relief the true secret of Cardinal Mercier's wide-spread personal influence. It was his unaffected and "fundamental good will to all men", which gave him an instant and profound understanding of everyone he met; it gave him also the power, by his instinctive and great hearted sympathy, to call out what was best in a man's nature. This power to awaken whatever of the best was latent in others, arose also from his own strikingly unconscious humility, which drew all hearts to him. It is said that when elected Archbishop of Malines, he was the only one then living who was genuinely surprised.

Most of us already know of Cardinal Mercier's fearless and resolute defence of the people of Belgium through the long and terrible years of the German occupation. Anyone, however, wishing to have a deeper insight into the great soul from which sprang the many intrepid acts with which those years were filled, will receive a flood of light by reading Monsignor Laveille's most interesting book.

T. D.

What is Man?, by John Henry Clarke, M.D., and Leopold Salzer, M.D.; published by John M. Watkins, London; price 3*s.* 6*d.*

The publications of John M. Watkins are always welcome. Long experience has proved that, with rare exceptions, they are valuable contributions to Theosophical literature; and although *What is Man?* cannot rank with such "spiritual delights" as *The Path of the Eternal*

Wisdom or *The Cloud of Unknowing*, it should serve an equally important though very different purpose,—that of off-setting the widely promulgated materialism of Sir Arthur Keith and Sir John Bland-Sutton, whose standing as surgeons gives them an entirely fictitious reputation in matters which are no more within their province than delicacies of flavouring are the concern or responsibility of butchers. For Dr. Clarke is a physician of international reputation, whose experience taught him, years ago, that bodies are merely the outermost layer, as it were, of the mystery we call man. Man, he says, is the Thought of God; and he quotes Paracelsus with approval as declaring that "everything in the universe reflects itself in Man, and may come to his consciousness, and this consciousness enables man, when he knows himself, to know the Universe." Dr. Clarke, in brief, is a Theosophist with the courage of his convictions; an avowed believer in the finer forces of nature—spiritual, astral, etheric—who looks for the causes of things in the invisible rather than in the visible world, and who acts upon the conviction "that everything we see around us in national, civic and personal life, is the materialized thought of man."

Our only criticism of the book is that *if* the author (for the chapter by Dr. Salzer is a reprint from an Indian newspaper of 1889) wishes to reach "the many", it would be wiser to make allowance for their prejudices. This, for instance, is distinctly for "the few": "The physical body itself is the greatest of mysteries, because in it are contained in a condensed, solidified and corporeal state the very essences which go to make up the substance of the spiritual man, and this is the secret of 'The Philosopher's Stone'." "The many" can accept such a statement as the following (though without in the least understanding it): "It is in *harmony* and *complexity* and not in *singleness* that we must look to find essential *Unity*"; but to mention the Philosopher's Stone is to invite their ridicule,—because they think they know what it means.

T.

Creative Prayer, by E. Herman; James Clark & Co., London, 1928; price $2.50.

This book is not a manual on how to pray, nor a treatise on different stages of prayer. It is a forceful, original and stimulating statement of the philosophy of prayer. The point of view of the writer is refreshing in that she takes her stand on the highest plane possible; and instead of "watering down" her thesis to make it appeal to the tyro or the man in the street, she insists upon raising her readers to the highest that she can make them see. "It is not the more common, but the rarer forms of prayer, which represent the normal. The lower forms —*e.g.*, the spasmodic, instinctive cry of need—are instances of arrested development, and it is as unfair to measure prayer by them as to judge the strength of the human body from observing an invalid. Not the frenzied cry of sudden anguish, but the calm, trustful committal of faith, is the normal attitude of the praying soul. Not the answered prayer of the mother whose child is spared, but the apparently unanswered prayer of Our Lord in the Garden, is the classic instance" (pp. 34–5). True prayer, then, is the prayer of saints, mystics, and we may add, Masters. The pettiness of mind and heart of those who scoff at prayer, or who are satisfied with a self-constructed counterfeit, has seldom been made clearer than in this lucid and experienced treatment. Nowhere have we found a book which more nearly presents prayer in terms which meet Madame Blavatsky's definition in the *Key:* "We call it WILL PRAYER, and it is rather an internal command than a petition" (1st ed., p. 67).

There are chapters on "Prayer as Creative Energy", "The Ministry of Silence", "The Discipline of Meditation", "From Self to God", etc., which are conceived with a view to clearing away the misconceptions of the modern mind, and the placing of prayer where it should be—as a complete expression of the whole man in all his highest and truest relationships. The discipline of prayer is "co-extensive with life itself. Prayer is, in the last resort, worth exactly as much—or as little—as the man behind it. If the man who prays has an obstinate, prejudiced, undisciplined mind, his prayer will suffer from the same defects. If his desires are limited, gross and ill-guided, so will his prayer be. . . . . Prayer is the expression of a life. . . . . It rises out of a hinterland which determines its qualities. . . . . To pray to be made wise is the merest superstition, unless we bring to our prayer the kind of

soul that is capable of acquiring wisdom. We are responsible, not only for our prayers, but for providing the background against which prayers can energize" (pp. 22–3). There is an admirable statement of the modern churchman's self-imposed limitation of prayer. The average "good" Christian leads a life which is "reformed, but on the whole impotent" (p. 152). "We are slow to realize that the so called religious world is still—the world" (p. 62). "The spiritual realm is not only the last refuge, but also the most impregnable fortress of self-will" (p. 157). "We must at all costs recover the splendid spiritual courage that casts life behind its back, that puts self beneath its feet. . . . . There is no spiritual staying-power without life-long, unrelenting discipline" (pp. 144–5). "More spiritual failure—especially failure in prayer—than we like to think, can be traced to bodily slackness" (p. 162).

Before he is finished with this volume, the man in the street will be made to feel that there is little use in his pretending to himself that conventional prayer in church or at home will accomplish anything, and that if he really wish to join the Choir Invisible he must face facts and completely re-organize his scale of values. This book should, therefore, be of special help to those who have been brought face to face with the fact that their own prayer-life has been inadequate, and has failed to be the support they imagined that it should be in times of stress.

A. G.

Le Retour Éternel et la Philosophie de la Physique, by Abel Rey, Professor at the Sorbonne; Ernest Flammarion, Paris, 1927.

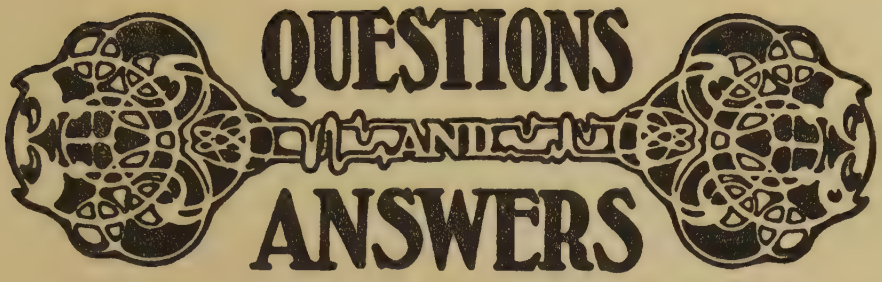
M. Rey defends "the idea that phenomena revolve in a cyclic fashion". His argument is rather technical, resting almost entirely upon the application of the "calculus of probabilities" to the data of molecular motion and the kinetic theory of gases. However, his conclusions are clearly stated and are sufficiently general to interest the lay reader.

He conceives of physical Nature as necessarily and eternally repeating itself. This conception accords with the scientific comparison of the material universe to a machine. A machine is preëminently a cyclic phenomenon, a repeating instrument. But the man-made machine is not eternal, nor is it in any sense self-perpetuating. Its parts are worn away by rust and friction. Above all, it cannot regenerate the power which it converts into mechanical energy. It is subject to Carnot's law, to the "principle" of the degradation of energy. Certain hasty thinkers of the Nineteenth Century, taking the mechanistic symbolism too literally, assumed that the universe as a whole is equally subject to final and permanent degradation; that its average temperature is destined to fall ultimately to "absolute zero"; that it will ultimately be as dead and useless as an old steam engine. M. Rey contradicts this view by offering laboratory evidence of rebuilding processes visibly going forward in Nature. The so-called Brownian movement of molecular masses is a visible illustration of the conservation of energies within a system in a constant state of cyclic transformation. The universe has discovered the secret of perpetual motion.

It is interesting that M. Rey tries to relate the idea of cycles in Nature with consciousness. Consciousness in itself, he believes, is not cyclic. It is more perfect than objective Nature, "because its end is present in itself, because it is not a closed cycle but a tendency, a progression, which does not have to repeat itself" (p. 312). Manifested consciousness contemplates the cycles of matter. M. Rey does not consider the hypothesis that this contemplative activity may be a force causing matter in its successive cycles to assume forms which correspond to those which came before but which are not identical with them. Is it not an observable fact that the cycles of Nature are not always closed but are often drawn out and upwards into spirals?

However, M. Rey concludes his work with a statement which illustrates both his own appreciation of values and the general change of heart in so many men of science since 1875. "The law of the eternal return in the objective universe is the externalization of the inward intuition of our eternity: 'Sentimus et experimur nos æternos esse' " (p. 316). One recalls the saying of Plato that "time is a moving image of eternity".

S. L.



QUESTION NO. 343.—*Is it necessary to accept all Masters in the sense that the Master Christ said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life"?*

ANSWER.—We are not sure just what the questioner means by, "Is it necessary?" Necessary for what purpose? It is not necessary, for instance, even to believe in the existence of Masters, to become, and to remain, a member of The Theosophical Society in good standing. Familiarity with the ideas expressed in theosophical writings will, however, very soon make belief in Masters a logical necessity to any open-minded man. Many students of Theosophy believe in the fundamental unity of the universe; that there is one Self common to all men, and that the Masters are the complete and perfect embodiment of this one Self. ("I and my Father are one.") True growth is growth toward union with this Self, the Supreme Spirit. This can only be accomplished by the aid of that Spirit itself, which reaches us, not directly, but through the Master on whose ray we may be. This Divine Spirit is the Way, the Truth and the Life. The Masters are the incarnation of it, represent it, and transmit it to those on their ray, each one of them thus becoming to those on his ray, the Way, the Truth and the Life. As stated above, however, it is not "necessary" to believe any of this to be a member of The Theosophical Society in good standing. J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—As I understand it, each individual, becoming an accepted chêla, would realize that his own Master was the Way, the Truth, and the Life in the fullest sense; otherwise he never could have arrived at chêlaship. I should think that in a more limited sense, this might also be true for the same individual in his relation to "all Masters" in so far as they are all integral parts of the Lodge, and must therefore share the common Lodge consciousness with the particular Master in question, but in this sense only. The chêla's Path is his own Master in the most literal interpretation, and could not, save indirectly, be found in or through another Master. T. A.

ANSWER.—The Lodge of Masters is a Brotherhood working in harmony for the salvation of the human race as a whole, to whom, as our "Elder Brothers", we owe reverence, loyalty, devotion, and, above all, gratitude for their unceasing efforts to aid mankind; but the "Way" to the Lodge for each individual lies through the particular Master upon whose ray that individual happens to be. Most of us in the West are probably upon the ray of the Christian Master; many in the East are upon the ray of some Eastern Master, as, for instance, Krishna, who, speaking as the Logos, said to Arjuna: "Set thy heart on Me, thy love on Me, sacrifice to Me, bow down to Me, thus joining thyself to Me in union, and bent on Me, thou shalt come to Me." M.

ANSWER.—It would seem that for every individual human soul one Master is "the Way the Truth, and the Life". This may be the Master Christ or another. Every man must discover for himself the ray which transmits to his consciousness the Light of the Eternal. At the head of that ray is a Master, "the translator, so to speak, of the invisible world into the visible and the objective." It is a reasonable supposition that all Masters act thus as *translators*, and that they help one another. It is inconceivable that any Master would ever

try to draw to his own ray the children of another Master. They are united by a common purpose,—to lead men, along their several paths, to the consciousness of immortal being. "The Master-Soul is One." V. S.

ANSWER.—For those who follow the Master Christ, for all those on his ray, it is clear that he is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. But not all are on the ray of the Master Christ; there are other Masters, other rays. Each Master is, for those on his ray, the Way. In that sense we must accept Christ's saying as universally true of all Masters, although for many the way may be through him alone. C. R. A.

ANSWER.—What does the querent mean by "necessary"? Many members regard it as logical to believe that each Master is "the Way, the Truth and the Life," to those "on his ray", but whether such a conclusion is necessary or not, each must decide for himself. C. M. S.

QUESTION NO. 344.—*We read a good deal in Theosophical writings, especially those treating of the devotional aspects, of hidden desires—those which really guide actions which we may honestly think arise from very different motives; how can we uncover those secret and often unworthy desires?*

ANSWER.—Only a man far along in spiritual development knows with certainty his own motives. It is one of the most difficult of tasks. A first step is to realize that our motives are always tainted with self to a greater or less degree, and are frequently contemptible. When we really believe that, we can begin to study the tricks and subterfuges by which lower nature deceives us. Many of these tricks are described by spiritual writers, whose books should be read with the constant effort to apply to ourselves what is said, searching in our experience for instances of each type of deceit described. It is often easy to see where others are deceiving themselves, and here again we should apply what we learn to ourselves. We may be quite sure that we are doing the same thing, perhaps in a different form. Lower nature is the same in all of us. Much may be learned by carefully watching our conversation. Why did we say what we did? How much can be traced to vanity, to the desire for approbation, for attention, for holding the centre of the stage? What was the reason for our criticism of others? Could it have been so low a thing as envy, to pull down another that, by contrast, we might seem higher, in our own or others' eyes? What impression were we trying to convey, and why? And so on. Mr. Griscom's article on Self-Examination in the QUARTERLY for July, 1918, will be found very helpful in this connection. J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—One of the most important exercises in the spiritual life is self-examination. Its value is incalculable, if honestly, courageously, patiently carried out. Self-examination is vague and too general unless confined to specific things. For this a Rule of Life is necessary to give a standard by which to measure. Short of Adeptship, there is no such thing as an absolutely pure motive; we should, therefore, strive constantly to purify our motives. As we live faithfully according to the light that we have, further light will be given for the next step; it is a matter of growth. The questioner might read, or re-read, with profit, Mr. Griscom's Elementary Article on "A Rule of Life", in the January, 1915, QUARTERLY, the concluding sentence of which is: "If we have some hidden fault, some rotten spot in the nature, a Rule is sure to bring it to the surface, and this is as it should be, for we cannot hope to conquer and get rid of an unknown fault or weakness." M.

ANSWER.—A beginning can be made by selecting one desire or motive which we have been told we have, or which it seems likely that we have, and then scrutinizing our actions for evidences of that motive. We should remember, however, that self-knowledge is a spiritual science, and that progress in it is in direct ratio to our progress in self-conquest, with all that that term implies. Study and meditation make clear the next step or two upward; but only when those steps have been taken can we gain the more comprehensive view, or understand the next steps to follow. C. M. S.

QUESTION NO. 345.—*I have been reading the life of St. Francis of Assisi. Why, since he evidently had gone far along the Path in a previous existence, did he lead so wild a life for the first few years of his reincarnation? I can see that he far overbalanced that part of his life in later years—but why that part at all?*

ANSWER.—One may doubt whether, judged by ordinary standards, St. Francis did lead a "wild" life at any time. Those who attain nearness to their Master, see their past lives in his eyes and realize the ugliness and sin of actions which others regard as entirely harmless. The modern biographer, who may see nothing wrong in vanity, self-indulgence or self-will, often fails to understand the deep contrition of the saint for any form of self-love, and assumes that his expressions of sorrow for past "wickedness" must refer to the gross sins that the biographer himself would call wicked.

Assuming, however, the youth of St. Francis to have been wild, it is not to be wondered at. It often takes time for the soul to awake after the shock of incarnation. Such a soul as St. Francis must have attained a high degree of development, and hence of power, in previous lives. A strong soul needs and develops a powerful personality, which correspondingly increases the difficulty of mastering it. It follows that, up to a certain point, greater development may mean a harder and not an easier task for the soul. St. Francis incarnated to perform an exceedingly difficult piece of work, and needed a powerful instrument to carry it out. We may think of him as a horseman about to start on an important mission requiring long, fast riding. He selects a high-mettled thorough-bred who may run away with him at first but whose speed and endurance can be counted on to endure to the end, where a tamer steed would fail. It is not the avoidance of outer sin that makes spiritual development, but the passionate, single-hearted love of one's Master, and the unremitting struggle to carry out that Master's will and to live up to the ideal that he gives. The victory is in the struggle, not in the outer result. J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—Perhaps for the very reason that he had gone far along the Path in previous incarnations. Assume that there remained in him, however, tendencies, elements in his lower nature which had not been eliminated, which were still danger points; they were perhaps, the last things of which he had to rid himself, before he could be used as an instrument of the Lodge. What more likely than that he was placed by design, through the operation of his own Karma, in the very environment in which he found himself? Born into a family of great wealth, so wealthy that Francis had as his companions the sons of nobles; born at a time when his immediate world was given over to the worship of luxury, of the material, of self-indulgence of all kinds; a spoiled child, at the influence of every cross-current of the pleasure-loving life around him, what more natural than that everything in him of wrong tendency should find full and complete expression early? In such a forcing-house, the remaining elements of evil within him came quickly to their growth. Francis saw them for what they were, knew what it was that he must do, and turned, finally and completely, from wealth to Lady Poverty, from the chivalry of the world to the sacred heart within it. C. R. A.

ANSWER.—We must also remember his earlier births, and the possible dregs carried over from them, which had to come into manifestation, before they could be conquered. Further, we are told that, as the inner nature grows strong, a part of its strength may run down into the lower nature, strengthening it, and so causing just such an ebullition as is recorded in the youth of Francis of Assisi. J.

T·S·ACTIVITIES

NOTICE OF CONVENTION

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

To the Branches of The Theosophical Society:

1. The Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society will be held at 64 Washington Mews, New York, on Saturday, April 27th, 1929, beginning at 10:30 A.M.

2. Branches unable to send delegates to the Convention are *earnestly requested* to send proxies. These may be made out to the Secretary T. S., or to any officer or member of the Society who is resident in New York or is to attend the Convention. These proxies should state the number of members in good standing in the Branch.

3. Branch Secretaries are asked to send their annual reports to the Secretary T. S. These reports should cover the significant features of the year's work and should be accompanied by a complete list of officers and members, with the full name and address of each; also a statement of the number of members gained or lost during the year; also a record of the place and time of Branch meetings. These reports should reach the Secretary T. S. by April 1st.

4. Members-at-large are invited to attend the Convention sessions; and all Branch members, whether delegates or not, will be welcome.

5. Following the custom of former years, the sessions of the Convention will begin at 10:30 A.M. and 2:30 P.M. At 8:30 P.M. there will be a meeting of the New York Branch of the T. S., to which delegates and visitors are invited.

6. On Sunday, April 28th, at 3:30 P.M., there will be a public lecture. Tickets are not required for admission. Invitation cards will be supplied to all members, on request, so that they may have opportunity to call the lecture to the attention of their friends who reside in New York or in the vicinity. Following the address, tea is served at 64 Washington Mews, to delegates, members, and the friends they wish to invite.

ISABEL E. PERKINS,
Secretary, The Theosophical Society.
P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York.

February 15th, 1929.

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The Theosophical Society

Founded by H. P. Blavatsky at New York in 1875

THE Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

The organization is wholly unsectarian, with no creed, dogma, nor personal authority to enforce or impose; neither is it to be held responsible for the opinions of its members, who are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they desire for their own.

The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society, held at Boston, April, 1895:

"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane, and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics*.

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *path* to tread in this."

Applications for membership should be addressed to the Secretary T. S., P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York.